

PUNKY



Shell guide to LIFE ON THE CLIFF



Accessible to man only with difficulty, the cliff remains a wild haven for birds and plants, and one which is little modified except by nature. Among its sea birds are HERRING GULL (1) and FULMAR (2), and SHAGS (3), flying in and out to sea after their fish-food. Among land birds which take advantage of the cliff are RAVEN (4), and PEREGRINE FALCON (5); and the STONECHAT (male 6: female 6A), which nests among the low gorse (7) at the cliff top, and makes a note like pebble hitting pebble.

Like woodland, the cliff gives enough shelter, shade and damp to several plants, especially the PRIMROSE (8) and the BLUEBELL (9), which often carpet cliffs in Cornwall and Devon. Dark holes are often luxuriantly and shinily green with a peculiar fern, the SEA SPLEENWORT (10). Sunny places are cushioned with THRIFT or SEA PINK (11) and SEA CAMPION (12); and right down to high water mark ROCK SEA SPURREY (13) is an abundant little plant.


The seals below are the commoner GREY SEAL (14) and, despite its name, the COMMON SEAL (15) which isn't so common.

NOTE: All the items shown in this picture would not, of course, be found in one place at one time.

Painted by John Leigh Pemberton



The "Shell Guide to Trees" is now published in book form by Phoenix House Ltd. at 7s. 6d. The Shell Guides to "Flowers of the Countryside", "Birds and Beasts", and "Fossils, Insects and Reptiles" are also available at 7s. 6d. each. On sale at bookshops and bookstalls. In U.S.A. from Transatlantic Art Inc., Hollywood by the sea, Florida, \$2.00.

You can be sure of  The Key to the Countryside



PUNCH

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THE DEPUTATION which called upon Mr. Heathcoat Amory asking him to get on with the National Theatre employed as their argument the value of the Theatre as a source of revenue from the tourist trade. This was obviously the right approach. Originally someone had had the foolish idea of trying to convince him on cultural grounds.

IT WAS just like the scientists to spoil last week's eighty-two in the shade by telling us of their plans to produce their new 30,000,000° successor to Zeta.

WHEN it was found that coloured men were still asking those white Wolverhampton girls to dance, the management of the hall announced a plan to install "stronger lighting." One way or the other that should do the trick.

Coming to Something

"Mr. John Hare, Minister of Agriculture, has rejected the advice of the Daily Express." *Daily Express.*

TENANTS who won't pay their rent due to the council at Thetford are to be ordered to take down their television



aerials. This, it is thought, will show them what it's like to have nothing coming in.

ADMIRERS of Ghana's progress in all directions thrilled afresh at the news

that she was now to have her own airline. It was a pity that B.O.A.C. had to announce that this would consist of one airliner, the one which B.O.A.C. was already flying between Accra and London anyway, which would continue to be operated by B.O.A.C. crews to the present B.O.A.C. schedules as shown in B.O.A.C. time-tables.

THERE was a breath of nostalgia in the recent warning that children should beware of eating "attractive-looking



berries and seeds." It should stop them from routing about looking for them under old, uncleared landmines, unexploded shells, intriguing lead cylinders, phials of brightly-coloured capsules, etc.

POLICE rushed to Paris after hearing that Alfred Hinds had been seen on the Left Bank. But by the time they reached it that's just what it was.

BLACKPOOL's baths superintendent was very angry when he found that the telephone directory listed his "Derby Baths" as "Dirty Baths," and told reporters "Someone will be in hot water for this." Just the man to fix it, too.

Mice or Men?

A MOUSE in the cellar can be whacked with your umbrella
Or eaten by the cat any day;
But a mouse in the sky, in search of some new gain to science
Is a matter for the R.S.P.C.A.



Punch Diary

A NEW and promising twist in the pattern of industrial disputes was heralded in Buenos Aires on the Fourth of July. At an Independence Day luncheon the Foreign Minister of Argentina, with the American Ambassador and six hundred other guests, got nothing to eat until the waiters "were assured of an immediate increase in wages." Compare this quick settlement—they got their lunch within an hour—with the dreary deadlocks of British bus and dock strikes and the lesson is plain. Close personal contact between both sides must in future be arranged at the first mutterings of trouble. The whole focus needs shortening. Once Mr. Macmillan's Sunday meat-dish has its cover raised to reveal nothing more edible than an ultimatum from the Smithfield men these little difficulties will be over before there's been time even to get the trade union leaders before the TV cameras.

Hyperbolic Section

SOMETIMES, in the excitement of the moment, people express their indignation with a touch of forgivable exaggeration. Mr. Goldfine, for instance, when informed that a microphone had

been fished out with a wire coathanger from under the door of an hotel room occupied by his staff, cried out in anguish that this invasion of his privacy was "worse than Russia, worse than the Gestapo." The hour was early, he was still in his dressing-gown, and it is not to be supposed that before delivering himself of this severe judgment he carefully ran over in his mind every known instance of intrusive behaviour by the secret police of Stalin or Hitler. He simply spoke from a full heart, as anyone would who found an associate of Mr. Drew Pearson's next door. But when Mr. Clement Davies, in the Privilege Debate in the Commons, said that "if the House votes that this privilege, granted in 1688, does not extend to us to-day, they will . . . do the worst disservice to the people of this country which has been done in the last 300 years" he clearly spoke with all the forethought and deliberation that Members of Parliament are wont to give to their utterances. The worst has now been done. Since the removal of the Mace in 1653 no more shocking blow (in Mr. Clement Davies's considered opinion) has been struck at our liberties than this decision that M.P.s cannot say what they like with impunity about third parties in letters to Ministers. We seem to have been, in the interval, a singularly fortunate people.

Patriotic Frolics

THE League of Empire Loyalists are indefatigable, seizing microphones from Ministers, heckling whole processions by loud-speaker van, mumming at Lambeth Palace, being asked by Mr. Woodrow Wyatt to tell "Panorama" viewers whether they enjoy life. It is part of the increasing drabness of British behaviour, in contrast to the increasing gaiety of British clothes, that high spirits have to be fitted out with a

serious purpose. When Horace de Vere Cole organized the "Sultan of Zanzibar" and the other classic hoaxes he never found it necessary to claim that he was having his fun in defence of White Supremacy or as a gesture of solidarity with the Throne. Soon undergraduates perching cars or crockery on roofs will be issuing press statements that they are trying to keep Ghana in the Commonwealth.

Con Brio

I foresee a lively autumn tour of the Carl Rosa Company with incidents not unlike the Marxian comic crescendo in *Night at the Opera*, for the musicians and singers say they won't play unless things alter, while the Trust maintain that the company will "go ahead in full vigour." *Carmen*, for instance, might be given a new look if the girl from the cigarette factory were pushed on willy-nilly by the Council of Management to do a bit of reluctant flirting as Sir Donald Wolfit, Professor Humphrey Procter-Gregg and Mr. Alan Bohn rushed in and out of the wings with trays suspended from the shoulder shouting "It's the tobacco that counts, señorita" and "Twenty for three bob, cut price from the works." As for *Rigoletto*, I should be terrified, if I were the Artistic Director, lest at the moment when poor Gilda's body is delivered in a sack some malcontent oboeist sprang up in the orchestra-well with an ill-timed ad lib such as "That's right, Riggers, boy, you've got the sack, same as those perishing trustees ought to."

Flag Day

THE other day I was approached, in a London railway terminus, by a personable young lady bearing a collecting-box and a tray of flags. It is pleasant to be brought to a standstill by a dazzling smile from a total stranger in such grimy and clamorous surroundings, but I was in a hurry. "What's it for?" I asked—a question which on previous similar occasions I have never allowed further than the tip of my tongue. The result was surprising. Her smile was replaced by a look of utter blankness. Then, after a frantic glance at the legend on her collecting-box: "Er . . . Mental Health," she said, apologetically. And tried to smile again,

I felt somehow as though I were dropping my coin into a void.



"Well, they certainly didn't make their four million pounds out of me . . ."



or, come to think of it—did they?"



. . . and passed by on the other side

"There are three men in the world to-day who could, by using their influence, bring about the restoration of law and order and of peace and calm in the Island of Cyprus. Those men I believe to be the Prime Minister of Greece, Archbishop Makarios and the Prime Minister of Turkey."—Lord Harding of Petherton

WESTERN APPROACHES : The Class System

Continuing a series of articles on aspects of modern thought and behaviour

THE SIZE OF THE CAR IS NO GUIDE

By REBECCA WEST

YEARS ago at a party I heard a horrible blond young man who was, I believe, a diplomat, make a remark which made clear the inner and beneficent meaning of the class system. He complained that it was too bad of people to ask one to dine early if they lived in a remote part of London, and somebody replied "Yes, it takes a long time to get out to Hampstead or Highgate," at which he closed his eyes, to show us that he was in pain, and said "One rarely dines in Hampstead, and never in Highgate, but sometimes one dines in Kensington Palace Gardens." One saw the disagreeable position of the ambassadors and millionaires who inhabited that stately thoroughfare: they lived there because they had chosen a splendid and semi-official way of living, and they had to pay for the splendour by accepting certain obligations, one of

which was to ask to dinner young men like this one, who had somehow become part of the system. But if one did not want to be splendid one lived somewhere else, and one did not have to ask him to dinner, and he would not have come if he had been asked, and nothing could have been nicer.

It must always be true that class distinctions intimate to us what we let ourselves in for in the way of associates when we choose any particular way of living, and so help us to achieve what we all desire, a happy voluntary segregation among people we like who are inclined to like us. It is also always true that the beastliness of human nature finds the class system a useful instrument for brutal and capricious exclusion. But to-day there is another flaw in its operation. The structure of society is changing so rapidly, and the size of the

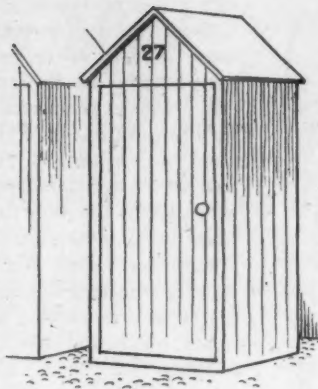
population makes it so difficult for one man to see what these changes are, that it is very difficult to make the necessary reclassification. As we cannot build a new class system which tallies with the facts we are apt to build one in fantasy. It is as if all the vegetables in our kitchen garden had suffered strange mutations, and were hardly recognizable, and we were insisting on treating them on the same horticultural principles as we treated the old types of plant, failing to get good results, and then falling back for guidance on our memory of the vegetables we had eaten as children, or read about in fairy tales. A generation might arise which thought that the pumpkin which took Cinderella to the ball, and Jack's beanstalk, were real growths.

Sociologists tell us that nowadays people try to estimate the social status of an individual who interests them by the value of his material possessions, such as his motor-car, and they deplore the limited value of such a test. But what is wrong with that particular test is not its failure to indicate more than the bare facts that a man has, or has not, the money to buy an expensive car, and prefers a grey car or a scarlet one; it is the spirit of wild nonsense in which people apply it. This I know well, from the fifteen years my husband and I spent under the moonshine influence of the first car we owned.

In 1937 we decided we had to buy a car, and I mentioned this at a party, adding that neither my husband nor I knew one kind of car from another. A total stranger then offered me a 1934 25-30 h.p. Rolls-Royce for four hundred pounds. I accepted this offer, because it seemed an easy way of buying a car. My friends were startled and suggested that he had been a gate-crasher and the car had been stolen, but actually he was an executor pressed by the heirs to wind up an estate quickly, and the car was a beautiful specimen of its beautiful kind. It also had the power of changing my husband and myself into inhabitants



"In case I'm asked, dear, is it all right if I go to the summit talks?"



of other people's dreams, figures of fantasy quite unrelated to our real selves.

Other Rolls-Royce owners drew no conclusions from the fact that we owned one; and they were right. At that time second-hand Rolls-Royces could be bought fairly cheap, because the shadow of Hitler was lengthening over Europe. But people who did not own Rolls-Royces never grasped this fact, though it should have been easy to deduce it, and they wove fairy tales about us. Many of them concluded that we were enormously rich, particularly if they were engaged in the hotel and restaurant business. When they saw us drive up to their establishment we were to them what the day being at the morn, the snail being on the thorn, meant to Pippa—a proof that God was in His heaven and all was right with the world. This was often enjoyable, but sometimes tiresome. They would put it to us as our duty to dine on grouse on the night of the Twelfth, and I came to understand what often appears the fatuous credulity of the rich. Such shocked disappointment darkened their faces when I betrayed knowledge of how rarely grouse served for dinner on that date had been flown down from the moors, how much more often it had spent the better part of a year lying Lenin-wise in an icy tomb. Two people the *maitre d'hôtel* had trusted (thanks to the car) to be pillars of the world were showing signs of buckling, the gilded ceiling might yet come down on us all. Had I been a kindly millionaire I would have eaten their aged bird just not to spoil their fun.

When we stayed at hotels the other guests (always provided they were not themselves Rolls-Royce owners) also

had illusions about us. They took it for granted that we must be Conservatives of an unbending type, though even then that cannot have been a safe bet, and must be much less safe now. To-day a really magnificent car may well belong to a bright young industrialist who thinks Nye Bevan our only hope. Our fellow-guests vainly expected us to play bridge and golf; and they also asked us about our plans for going to Ascot, the Grand National, the Eton and Harrow match, the Dublin Horse Show, the Grand Prix, to Cowes. The life ascribed to us assumed that we had the appetite for spectacles manifested by the citizens of ancient Rome and Constantinople, a considerable capacity for staff-work and much more leisure than either of us had ever had since we left kindergarten. Obviously people do play bridge and golf, and people do go to Ascot and the other festivities, but I doubt if many people were living a life so exclusively devoted to the higher junketing as our fellow-guests supposed. My impression is that even then there were very few Rolls-Royce owners who lived the life that those who did not own Rolls-Royces imagined; and I believe that some of the extreme fantasies were based on the opulence of Victorian days, before the Rolls-Royce had been invented.

Our car grew old. It had its own war, bringing back calves from sales on waterproof sheets, and chicks in the boot; and it was run into by a lorry full of carolling Allies insufficiently discouraged by a fog. It stayed with us for fifteen years, when we sold it for exactly the same sum as we had given for it. It always served us superbly, but there is no use pretending that it did not show signs of age. It was still splendid, but

not contemporary; it looked as alien from our age as a corseted woman wearing a net collar stiffened with whalebones and a skirt touching the ground. The only conclusion that sensible people could have drawn from our continued possession of this car was that we were hanging on to it because we did not feel like spending money on a new one. But it still kept its magic power to make strangers dream dreams about us. Indeed it enhanced our social value in the eyes of restaurants and hotels and their clients, who now decided that we must be too grand to care for appearances and treated us with a peculiar muffled respect. At Torquay I was asked what news I had about Queen Mary's health. And at the same time the darker aspect of the illusion we created remained just as dark.

Many people who envied us the possession of our Rolls-Royce carried their envy pleasantly; but quite a number felt a special and bitter animosity against us, which was always ridiculous in view of the financial facts of its purchase, and became blithering idiocy as it grew older. In 1947, in Knightsbridge, a brand-new car which must have cost five times what we had paid for the Rolls ten years before, skidded into our boot. A little man ran out of a bus queue and offered the driver of the new and blameworthy car (who was shocked and embarrassed) testimony on his behalf that we had been at fault. I could have killed him. I could pardon him for hating us simply as motorists, for it must be infuriating to stand in a bus queue at the end of a day's work and watch people drive past in their own comfortable cars. But I could not pardon him for failing to see which of



the cars, if either, belonged to one given to grinding down the faces of the poor, just because he had learned at his mother's knee that Rolls-Royces were posh. That man might lead a revolution to-morrow because of the Tranby Croft card-scandal.

I have met this obsolete fury on the Continent. In Italy when we halted in a village, pleased and amiable because we were on our way to see the Piero della Francesca at Borgo San Sepolcro, a glorious girl came out of a house just to scowl at us as if she were Medea and the poor old car was Jason. But the most imbecile example was in France. Two young people, who had been lying in the long grass, abandoned what they were doing, though their occupation is universally considered absorbing, in order to approach us, give the Communist salute, and spit with ritual solemnity on our Rolls-Royce. Could the young asses not see that the car was older than they were, and that no Commissar would have been seen dead in it?

To-day my husband and I ought to be loved and hated by strangers just three times as much as we were before because we now own a car which cost three times the sum we paid for the Rolls-Royce; but we are now not loved or hated at all, as motorists we are as invisible as clouds, simply because there is no popular myth about the name of this particular brand of car. This test of social status described by the sociologist is, in fact, deliriously applied. The

only excuse for this delirium is the difficulty of the situation. In the feudal age every man knew what his duties and privileges were, because his birth put him in a class from which only a convulsion of destiny could prise him, and he also knew what every other person's duties and privileges were. We feel that the structure of society ought to give us that certainty, but it now does not.

When Mr. T. S. Eliot wrote in a famous sentence that he believed that the culture of the twentieth century would belong to the lower middle-class he was being vague even for a prophet. What is the lower middle-class? I would define

it as consisting of those people who were directed to the works of Donne by the writings of Mr. Eliot, instead of finding them on their parents' bookshelves, but I do not believe that this is what Mr. Eliot had in mind when he wrote that sentence. Some have said that the angry young men of to-day represent that class, but this is obviously wrong, for the Royal Court Theatre is plainly a mutation of the old Bullingdon Club. Indeed when we look round to find not a sub-section of the middle-class but the broad category itself, we see some confusing sights. Who are these dishevelled young women with hordes of children trailing at their skirts, too tired and too busy to keep themselves and those children tidy, but full of happy animal contentment, good nature and feckless confidence in the morrow? Forty years ago the answer would have been immediate; the women from the slums. To-day that answer

would be wrong. These would be the well-bred and educated women of the upper middle-classes, and often the upper classes, who have changed their mind about reproduction just at the time when domestic help is unprocurable and school fees have become enormous, and who will no doubt in time be the object of visits from neat and restrained women from the council houses, who will tactfully urge on them the necessity for birth-control.

It is no wonder that people abandon the effort to get the facts straight and make up their own myths about the classes. This works out well for some people. Lady Diana Cooper's Memoirs reveal why it is that for the last forty years she has been universally admired. She, a duke's daughter, has always behaved as people who know nothing of dukes' daughters imagine they behave. This pleased them and gave a thrill of surprise to those who did know other dukes' daughters. This cult does nobody any harm and passes the time pleasantly enough, but hatred directed against men and causes long dead is certainly a waste of energy. But John Osborne, that perfect mirror of his age, made no mistake in *The Entertainer* when he made the dissident young man attack society by giving a satiric recitation of "The Absent-Minded Beggar." Nobody can possibly remember hearing that ballad at the time when it was composed unless they had passed the normal expectation of life.

There must be a real class system working itself out in our society, sorting out people afresh into recognizable varieties, giving us hints as to our proper places in this newly-constructed maze of society. But it constantly clashes with a class system which exists only in our dreams. The name of the resulting condition is schizophrenia.

Next week's contributor will be JAMES THURBER.

Other writers in this series will be:

JOHN BERGER
MONICA FURLONG
ANTONY HOPKINS
D. F. KARAKA
WOLF MANKOWITZ

HUGH MASSINGHAM
DREW MIDDLETON
MAURICE RICHARDSON
GEORGE SCOTT
JOHN WAIN

R. C. ROBERTSON-GLASGOW.

Your Weather and Mine

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD,

F.R.Met.F., B.Sc. (Aneroid)

CASUAL readers of this column may recall that my predictions for June were almost one hundred per cent accurate. In May I wrote: "Next month will live up to its glorious reputation. There will be long dry periods leading to a possibility of drought over the greater part of the country. Some humidity is, however, only to be expected. The barometer should set fair for Ascot, Wimbledon, Lord's and Henley."

Well, I was right. Some humidity there was, *precipitation being concentrated within two or three well-defined periods*, the first fifteen days, the last ten, and two or three days in between, *leaving the rest of the month very much as I had predicted*. The middle of June was brilliantly fine with temperatures nearly everywhere in the fifties. On the 17th a Dewsbury man died of heatstroke, and I personally was able to fry an egg on the pavement outside Windscale.

Some readers, however, have been churlish enough to challenge the accuracy of my forecasts and as a result the editor has invited me to draft my predictions for August in an entirely new form—one less likely to founder under the disapprobation of fusspots and malcontents. Here goes . . .

My reading of August is quite clear. It will come in on a Friday—always a lucky conjunction (unless of course the initial day of the month happens to fall on the thirteenth)—and will last a full thirty-one days. There should be plenty of sun. This will tend to develop off the East Coast and move steadily and relentlessly westwards towards the Atlantic. It may be visible to the naked eye. The solar track will be active; that is, it will give rise to variable thermal radiation. There will be a marked tendency for mornings and evenings to be cooler than mid-days, though there is just a possibility that radiation will be upset by sun-spots, icebergs, atmospherics or some convulsive change within the solar system.

Off the coast humidity will increase. The humidity will not of course be constant, but will move regularly in and out and disclose more or less of coastal sands and tanker sludge.

So much for the general situation. Regional forecasts follow immediately.

Over South, South-East and Central Southern England weather will be governed by short and long-term climatic factors. There is every prospect of settled conditions, but look out for isobars! At this time of year they can be extremely tiresome. Perhaps I should explain to readers unacquainted with the niceties of meteorology that isobars look rather like vapour trails (except that they are black) and are indicative of barometric pressure. In general it is true to say that the closer the lines the more certain it is they are hovering wherever you intend to spend to-morrow. And it is axiomatic, when these lines are far apart, that the meteorological cartographers have turned up late at the studio or drawing-office.

Over the Midlands, Northern England, Southern Scotland and the Highlands weather will be normal, with seasonal temperatures in many places, unseasonal in others. The belt of rain, snow and hail now covering part of the region will die out, to be replaced by a belt of hail, rain and snow. A chance of fog cannot be excluded.

Wales, the West Country, Northern Ireland and South Uist should enjoy long periods.

Turning to the rest of the year, September, October, November and December, my predictions are naturally somewhat less precise. All the signs, however, are that September and October will run true to form, with

shortening hours of daylight almost everywhere (I purposely exclude the area south of the nought degrees latitude line) and some diminution in over-all temperatures.

November and December will be much of a muchness, though the latter will be slightly longer.

My preliminary extra-long king-size forecast for 1959 is that England will contest the Test rubber in Australia in Mediterranean heat.

Another reliable forecast soon.



"If I want to go up and you're up, do I press the up button because I want to go up, or the down button to call you down to take me up, and if you're down and I want to go down, do I press the down button because I want to go down or do I press the up button to call you up to take me down, and if I want to go up and you're down do I . . ."

I Am an Estimator

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

THIS is an ad, frankly. Estimators Limited have had all the work they could handle lately, but the close season is here and we can take on a few small jobs. My partner, Mr. Chamney, for instance, is on call to estimate the age of bodies pulled out of sea water (he says, by the way, they seem to be mostly "about 67" this year) and—if pressed—the time they have spent in it. Mr. C. also deals with estimates of damage, loss, etc., in foreign lands. He finds "in excess of 250,000 pesetas" is about the norm for drought ravages, explosions in fruit-packing factories, bull-fight gates lost owing to political disturbances, and things of that kind.

My own field is more that of human activity. One reason I was so busy earlier this year was the great numbers of persons involved in the de Gaulle business. In estimating that 100,000 Algerians lined the streets of Algiers to greet him I had to take many factors into consideration—the length of the streets of Algiers, the average width of Algerians bent on lining them, and so on and so forth. I am aware that some people dismiss our job as little more than guesswork. When we estimate that two hundred rebels have set fire to the Ministry of Culture building in Santiago and been repulsed by nine thousand

police we make a close check on available facts first. I remember having to take Mr. Chamney to task—in the days when his work was less specialized—for hasty estimates on the number of rabbits destroyed by myxomatosis. He was millions out. Inquiries in scientific quarters revealed that there wasn't enough myxomatosis in the country to destroy the number *he'd* given. It was about that time I put him on to age-of-corpses and time-dead work, actually.

Of course, operating in the atomic age has complicated things. Actual quantities of neutrons, cyclotrons, etc., in any one place I have frankly given up. I send them to Harwell. T.N.T. equivalents of atomic test explosions I am prepared to take on, however, despite the close work involved; also estimates of square miles of destruction, contamination, area of climatic disturbances, and so on. In the field of atomic finances I am also quite at home. (It was my estimate last week, you may recall, which put the American sales of atomic equipment of all kinds at \$875,000,000). The kilowatt yield of reactors I don't mind taking on either.

Sociologically, of course, we are up against the fact-finders. Fact-finding is to estimating as photography is to painting in oils. I always try to make

this clear to clients, and may as well do so to you. If you want facts, go to the Central Statistical Office. They are the people who can tell you that there are now 263,000 tons of chert and flint being produced annually; that three hundred and eighty-nine workers in the wholesale bottling industry were unemployed at the end of last year. But it is to us you have to turn if you want to know that consumption of school milk in 1968 will be 5,768,600 gallons, and that 254,750 of the mugs it is drunk out of will have had their handles broken. Who but Estimators Limited could have estimated the Russian output of scientists at "over 24,000 annually"? That by next July the Tarzan films will have netted £178,000,000 at world box offices?

A few random examples, showing recent assignments, are given below:

Estimated damage to four-story department store burned in Beirut—£250,000.

Average audience of Mr. Khrushchev in East Berlin, 12,500.

Greenfly eggs to 1 sq. yard of average rosebed (clay soil): 97,000.

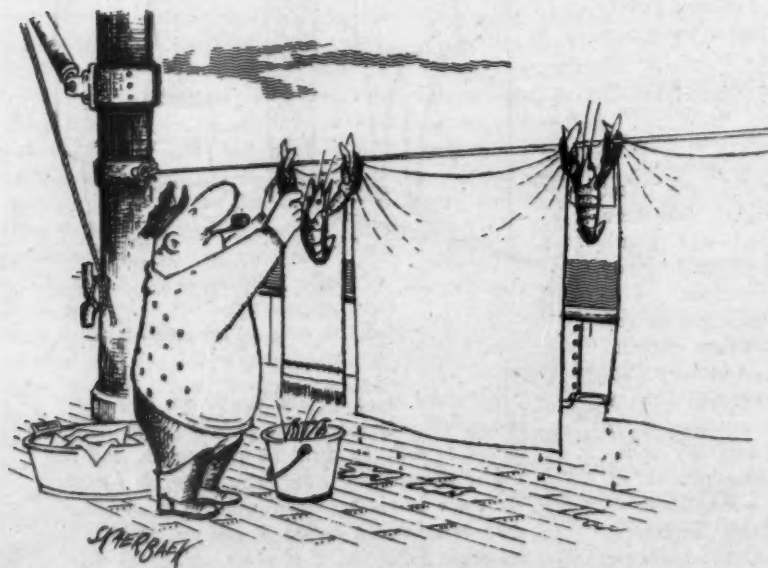
Liberal votes in Accrington: 75.

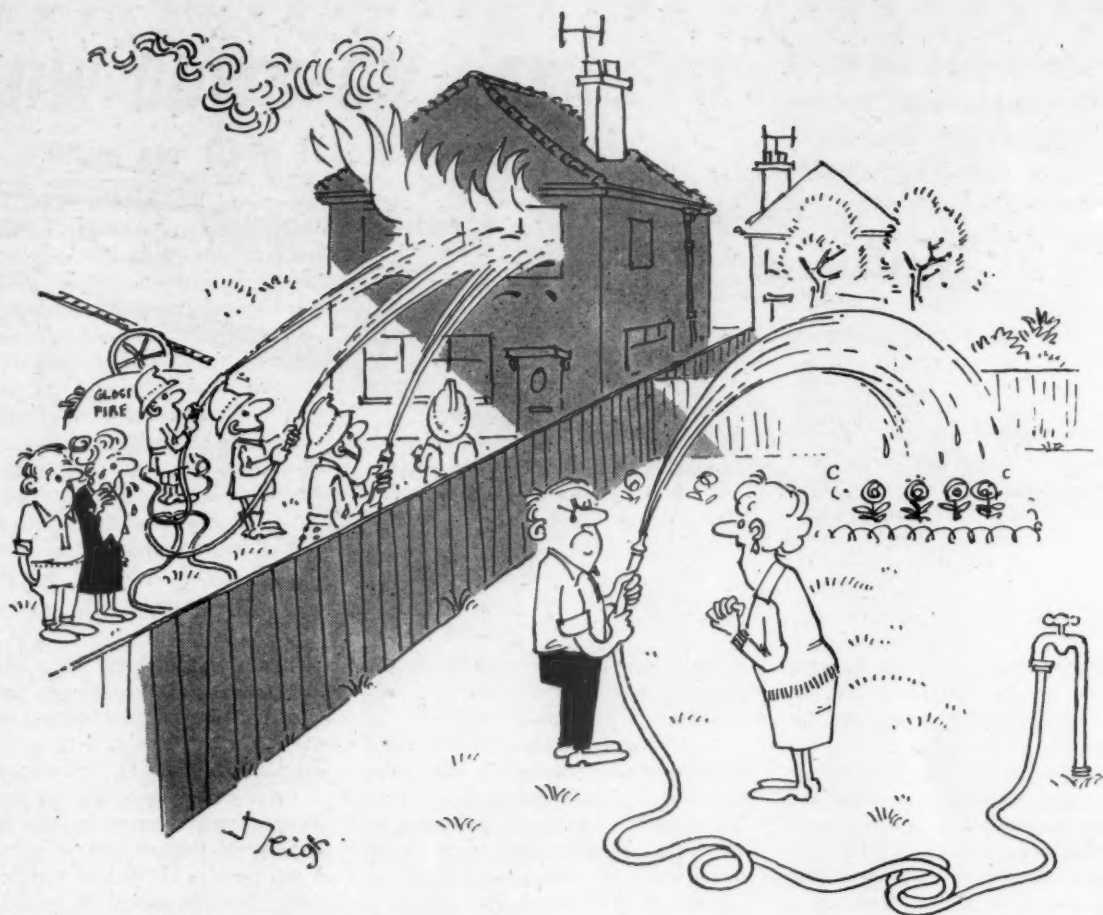
Cost of rebuilding the Palace of Westminster in the event of its being burnt down: £27,000,550.

Veterinary Surgeons in favour of National Health Service for dogs: 640.

I should like to emphasize once more that mere fact-collection is outside the sphere of Estimators Limited. It would have been relatively simple, for example, to interview the country's veterinary surgeons in the assignment mentioned above. Our own method was to get the views of six National Health doctors who kept dogs and make a series of broad deductions. By a curious chance Mr. Chamney came to very nearly the same statistical conclusions as I did myself, though by some misunderstanding it turned out that he had been basing his estimate on goldfish sales.

Estimators Limited can help You. Whether it is people or pounds, afforestation prospects or milk-bottle wastage, we can give you the answer. Have you any idea how many things you need to know that you thought no organization could ever tell you? Hundreds probably. It's hard to say. Why not send for an estimate?





"Why not forget your grudge, dear?"

Let There be Resonance

By E. S. TURNER

THE fact that I have been frightened off public speaking for life involves little real hardship to the community. I like to think that better men may be able to improve their voice production by studying the very textbook* which has left me with stultification of the glottis.

Dimly, I always suspected that clavicular breathing was at the root of my breathlessness. I had never stopped to consider that my tendency towards pedantic delivery ("It-tah izz-u alle-moast-eh impossibullu too eelustrait-ah in-eh pr-r-r-int-eh thee r-r-ay-zzoolt-ah

ovv-uh this-s-s forlt-ah") was caused by, among other things, the rebound of explosive consonants.

But where I really fell down was in not knowing how to harness my soft palate and sinuses in order to improve the resonance of my speech.

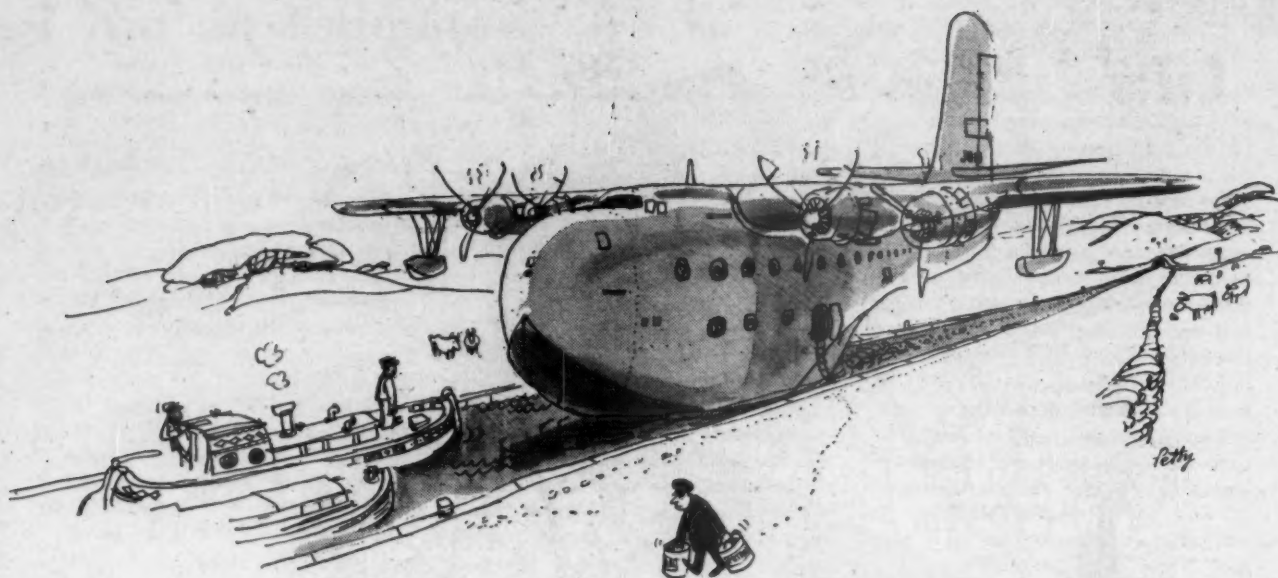
"Keep the soft palate well raised..." begins one instruction by Mr. Harry Johnson. Now I know what the soft palate is; it is "the upper portion of the mouth at the back." In my time I have probably raised and lowered it a good deal but I can no more raise it to order than I can wag my ears. Other people no doubt can perform both feats, and I envy them.

One effect of lowering the soft palate, it seems, is to force the sounds to proceed through the nose, which is *not* the way to achieve a pleasing nasal resonance. Says Mr. Johnson: "The true ring of reverberation of vocal sounds in the nasal cavities BEFORE they are projected through the mouth should be cultivated."

Yes, Mr. Johnson, but *how*? I tried this sort of thing forty years ago when I had hopes of becoming a professional ventriloquist ("with lips almost closed, contract the glottis and use only the tip of the tongue") and I got nowhere.

On sinuses Mr. Johnson says: "These best contribute to a resonant

* "Practical Speech Training" by Harry Johnson (Jenkins, 10/6)



voice by the thinking of the sounds first UPWARDS (to the headbones and the bones of the mask of the face) and then FORWARDS (into the audience) WITHOUT UNDUE STRAIN OR FORCE." Elsewhere he asserts that thinking the tone into position is something which can be developed and stabilized by practice.

I spent twenty minutes trying to think sounds in and out of my sinuses and it is allemoast-eh impossibullu to describe the resultant noises; they were not unlike those which a certain type of elderly scholar makes to himself all day in the British Museum Reading Room.

At this stage I realized I was trying to do advanced senior exercises before I had mastered the simpler ones. Back I went to page 11 and with "lips spread like a smile" and "tongue arched towards the roof of the mouth" I tried to make the sound "ee" as in "heed." All I achieved was "glug," as in comic strip. I was in the same state of helpless unhappiness as when I try deliberately to swallow a pill without crunching it.

The more I studied this book the more I began to think about anti-aircraft predictors. During the war a theory was evolved that nursemaids and barmaids might be able to operate these instruments more efficiently if they knew that when they turned a hand-wheel they were rotating Range through Time (or perhaps it was Time through Height). Such instruction tended to

induce a state half-way between awe and catalepsy and eventually the idea was abandoned. The minxes were told not to bother how the thing worked but just to turn the wheel smoothly, like Corporal Smith. That's how it is with me. Tell me what my larynx and pharynx are doing, or what they ought to be doing, and I am a complete write-off.

I do not wish to suggest that it is impossible to improve one's speech with the aid of a text-book. After all, thousands of bashful young men learn to waltz and fox-trot by taking correspondence courses. Mr. Johnson may tell me that his book is primarily designed for use in conjunction with the speech-training classes of the London College of Music, but the blurb assures me that it is "ideally suited as a self-tutor," and that is how I have been trying to use it.

Not all the exercises in this book are as exacting as those I have mentioned. I can recite the alphabet two and a half times without distress on one breath; alternatively, I can repeat the 16 letters after Mr. Johnson's name four times. When I say "The dew fell heavily on the mountain" no one thinks I am describing the misadventures of a Hebrew explorer (in any event one rarely finds Jews on mountains; they have more sense). And ever since I heard a Glasgow magistrate urge a witness to ar'r'ula-c more clearly I have been very careful

how I said "pickle bottle" and "Metropole Gardens." But the only reason I can say these phrases is because nobody ever told me what to do with my tongue and palate in order to pronounce them.

One object of this book is to encourage the speaking of received English; that is, the sort of English that is acceptable to top people. I wonder whether the author has not missed an opportunity here. Recent broadcast programmes have emphasized that certain classes of top people, like head-office bank managers, bishops and senior Staff Officers, all have their own variants of received English. Those who aspire to success in these fields know that they must speak in the same subtly off-beat accents as their masters, or perish.

Will Mr. Johnson, in a later edition, tell them how to manipulate their palates, their sinuses and, if necessary, their ears in order to achieve their ambition? He may immobilize a few incompetents like myself, but thousands of ambitious men and women will be lastingly grateful to him.

"Ice Cold in Alex . . . is the best picture we have made this year . . . Set in the Western Desert in 1942, it is so brilliantly realistic that you half expect to find sand in your shoes when you come out of the cinema."—*Daily Herald*

Any ambitious publicity-men listening?

Toby Competitions

No. 25—Modern Instances

"RAIN before 7, fine before 11," "Too many cooks spoil the broth" and so on have had their day. A new proverb, saw or maxim, please; in the same didactic spirit as the old ones but enshrining a new thought.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive Toby bookmarks. Entries (any number, but each on a separate piece of paper and accompanied by a separate entry token, cut out from the bottom left-hand corner of this page) by first post on Friday, July 25, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 25, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 22 (New Words)

This was difficult to judge because while many competitors minted one or even two good coinages few succeeded in finding three really satisfactory new words. Many took an existing word and gave it a slight twist, which seemed scarcely fair though it lead to some amusing ingenuities. Some relied on a sheer nonsensical sound, but to make the grade this sort of thing ought to convey the meaning as though by lunatic inspiration, and this is not easy. The winner was:

COMMANDER ROBERT T. BOWER
CARLTON CLUB
69 ST. JAMES'S STREET
S.W.1

Vipgrin (vip'grin) (vip, etym. doubtful: grin, A. S. *gremnian*, cp. O.H.G. *grinan*, to distort the face) *n.* A distortion of the face exposing the teeth as in laughter, derision or anguish; peculiar to statesmen meeting friends or enemies in the presence of press photographers; expresses affection, pleasure, disgust or contempt.

Prangusto (pran'gusto) [prang (onomat.) *v.i.* (Aer.slang)] to crash; gusto (L. *gustus*, taste) zest, enjoyment, pleasure *n.* A delight in other peoples' misfortunes. cp. G. Schadenfreude.

Snickmiker (snick'miker) [snick (thieves' slang), petty thief: miker (tailors' slang,) to skulk or shirk: cp. printers' s. mich)] *n.* A workman who strikes unofficially in breach of honourable agreements entered into on his behalf by his trade union.

Only two other competitors qualify for mention of their complete list:

Mepriacist (mepri'zist) person who habitually misses the point of jokes and especially cartoons (f. O.F. *mepriester*)

Fumbletrumpet (famb'l'trampit) person persistently rushing into speech without previous thought and blundering on until brought to a standstill in mid-sentence (etym. obvious)

Glumengast (glu: mongæst) (commonly in plural): persons who do not smoke or drink, have nothing to talk about and are always the first to arrive at a party [ME *gloume*, cf. MG *glümen* (gloom) + OE *giest*, cf. ON *gestr* G. *gast* (guest)] "Lamius Excubitor," Officers' Mess, 16 Battalion R.A.O.C., Bicester, Oxon.

Probomborate: *v.i.*, to speak loudly, pompously and at length in favour

of making and/or testing the nuclear bomb

Jocastration: *n.*, demotion of husband/father to secondary domestic importance (by popular glorification of maternity and maternal attitudes)

Conascend: *v.i.*, whimsically to defend, generally on paradoxical grounds, persons of greater distinction than oneself, E.g. "She may be a duchess but she's quite presentable," "Even a millionaire has some rights."

Katharine Dowling, 22 Markham Street, S.W.3

Of the remainder, quotation of one or two words only is possible:

Dullusion: *n.*, Suffering from a false impression of one's own ability for brinkmanship.

Nassecre: *n.* A Middle East blood-bath.—J. A. Hallam, Wychnood, 25 Fitzjohn Avenue, Barnet, Herts.

Orbituary: Report on unsuccessful launching of a satellite.—Ronald Graham, Woodside Cottage, Sanno, Isle of Arran

Summitry: *n.*, debate, discussion between heads of states, departments, etc.; preparations, negotiations for same. (slang) negative result.—I. H. C. Lake, Puffins Wood, Peter Avenue, Oxford

Pulchritate: *v.* To perform a part relying on vital statistics rather than acting ability.—J. P. Pinel, 67 Horn Park Lane, Lee, London, S.E.12

Derrière-à-plancher: A ballet movement in which the dancer makes sudden contact with the stage.—F. H. E. Townshend-Rose, 111 Thornbury Road, Osterley, Middlesex

Jawnge: Adjective describing sweets and other eatables which stick to the teeth and prevent you from talking for longer than anyone wants you to.—George Foulkes, 69 King's Court, King's Drive, Wembley Park, Middlesex

Uphoniac: One who has recently become aware of U words. A verbal snob; usually with an hysterical allergy to lounges.—Gerard Hamill, 3 Broomfield, Harlow

Hixle: *a.* Blemished by disorderly array of wires, rods, poles or other elongated attachments not part of the original design (a h. skyline; the roofs were h. with acrias, etc.) from the H.I.X.L. shape of television acrias.—W. J. Grant, 16 Harrington Road, London, E.11

Jaunesism (jōnz): *n.*, (path.) jaundiced condition caused by envy.—The Rev. G. and Mrs. Keable, St. Francis House, 8 Little Yongs, Welwyn Garden City, Herts

Offenbacchanalia: *n.*, a musical cinema show about high or low life in the nineteenth century, usually in colour.—Sheila O'Grady, 11 Ailesbury Gardens, Sidney Parade, Dublin

Claustrofolia: *n.* A morbid dread of being hemmed in by rampant room plants.—Peter Carlisle, New House, Easthampton, Kingsland, Leominster, Herefordshire

Anteteluvian: *adj.* A general term to describe out-of-date home recreations, such as radio, cards and conversation.—Joy Wates, Coombe Langly, Kingston Hill, Surrey

Etceterate: *v.i.*, to evade precision of thought by the glib use of such phrases as "and so on and so forth."—The Rev. Sebastian Shearer, Passionist Monastery, Minsteracres, Consett, Co. Durham

Toby bookmarks to all competitors named.

CHESTNUT GROVE

J. A. Shepherd's anthropomorphic drawings of animals and birds appeared in PUNCH between 1893 and 1939. He died in 1946



"I'LL SING THEE SONGS OF ARABY!"

April 12 1955



Empire and Commonwealth Games

Before the Games

By HAROLD M. ABRAHAM

YOU may have read that last Monday, July 14, Roger Bannister, for all time labelled as the first man to run one thousand seven hundred and sixty yards in under two hundred and forty seconds, left Buckingham Palace accompanied by two other Empire Games champions, Chris Chataway and Peter Driver. He was the bearer of a message from Her Majesty the Queen, the first of over six hundred runners who will carry the baton to Cardiff, the capital of the Principality of Wales.

At dawn on Wednesday, July 16, the baton will have crossed the Welsh border, and round about half-past six on Friday, July 18, the final relay runner will enter Cardiff Arms Park to hand the message to the Duke of Edinburgh who will declare the VIth Empire and Commonwealth Games open. The identity of the final runner is a secret, but the man most unlikely to lose his way in the grounds, even with the unfamiliar and, alas! temporary, running track, laid specially for the four days' athletics at a cost, I estimate, of about £1,000 for every hour of competition, is Ken Jones. For to his unique record as a Welsh Rugby International Ken adds the appropriate distinction of having been a member of Great Britain's Relay Team which won the Silver Medal at the 1948 Olympics at Wembley. Another occasion, you may remember, when a running track was laid down for the period of the Games only. And how badly this country needs permanent cinder tracks!

What is the occasion of this activity? What are these British Empire and Commonwealth Games? Is there really still a British Empire and Commonwealth? Strictly speaking, under the terms of the Statute of Westminster, there are ten independent States forming the free association known as the British Commonwealth. But there will be thirty-seven "countries" represented

at Cardiff, because one of the most attractive things about these Games, first held in Canada 28 years ago, is the lack of rigidity in the rules which govern them. You may be surprised to learn that the Mother Country is temporarily split not into three parts, like ancient Gaul, but six. England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, the Isle of Man and Jersey. If Jersey, you may ask, why not little Sark, Herm, Brechou, Jethou and Lihou? Why not indeed! And what has Dominica (one of the countries participating) got that Grenada, St. Lucia and St. Vincent haven't, unless it be that among her population (63,066 in 1955) there are some 400 Caribs, of whom about 40 are of pure blood.

Though modelled on the modern Olympics, revived in 1896, you will find at Cardiff little possibility of excessive nationalism rearing its ugly head. There will be no trouble about amateurism, for no one here attempts the futile task of trying to produce a universal definition for all sports; and there will be no representatives from totalitarian countries whom you can accuse, particularly if they win, of being professionals in everything but name. The more the merrier is the motto of those responsible, for it is possible to represent one country at one Games and, provided you have the necessary six months' residence, another at the next. You will find a very high standard of performance, in many cases as high as in the Olympics, but there will be nothing like so much at stake in the way of national prestige, and the competitions will be all the more enjoyable as a result.

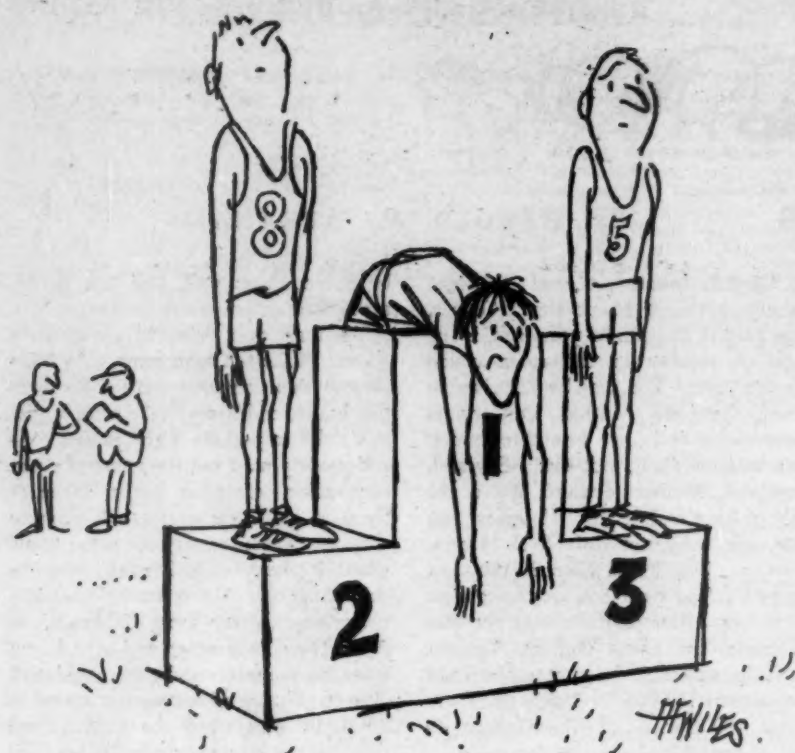
I hope you are going to Cardiff, but if you are not you will almost certainly see something of what is going on. Both television bodies will be going full blast (and who shall blame them after the fees they have paid to televise?); and even if you are allergic to all forms of air bombardment, for sound radio will

be in action as well, you can hardly avoid the written word in the press.

What are you going to see or hear about? Take the high jump. At Melbourne this contest went on for over five hours, and it may take even longer at Cardiff, especially if the judges conscientiously read out the name of every competitor before he jumps. One of them at least will compete favourably with the Welsh masterpiece—you know what I mean—Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgog.....goch. He is called Nagalam Ethiriveerasingham from Ceylon, he is Asian Games champion and even if you write his name vertically he could still clear it. But high jumping has ceased to be funny ever since the fundamental rule that the head should be higher than the buttocks as you crossed the bar was abolished in the mid-twenties. The ridiculous thing about high jumping, and pole vaulting too for that matter, is that you have to clear the greatest heights at the end of the competition when you are most exhausted. Why they don't



"Let's see now. Blocks A to K sold to the League of Empire Loyalists..."



start with the greatest heights (not far short of 7 ft. nowadays), and bring the bar down when you have failed, instead of putting it up when you succeed I wouldn't know.

But high jumping is not the only event in which conditions have changed. No starting blocks for sprinters when I was young, no fibre-glass poles for pole vaulters, no aerodynamic javelins, no mercury-filled hammers. One day runners will be allowed to carry oxygen bags—if allowed for climbing Everest why not for marathon running?

No Games is complete without a marathon race. The distance is 26 miles 385 yards. You might suppose that there was a deep significance about such a precise measurement. I assure you there isn't. The first marathon race was held at the revived Olympics Games at Athens in 1896. It was invented, and the man who invented it was a genius, to commemorate the mythical feat of Pheidippides. The story goes that in 490 B.C. Pheidippides, first of all as a professional courier, ran 150 miles to Sparta to get help. He failed because the Spartans wanted to wait for a full moon to engage in the

lunacy of fighting the Persians. Back came Pheidippides, fought at Marathon, and then ran to Athens with news of the victory. That finished him. The first marathon race ever was run from Marathon to Athens—distance 36,750 metres or 23 miles 1470 yards. What has that to do with some 3 miles 675 yards farther? Many a runner must have asked that question as he struggled over that ghastly final three miles. It has nothing at all to do with the original distance. In 1908 the organizers of the Games fixed the course from Windsor to the White City, measured exactly 26 miles to the entrance to the running track, and 385 yards from thence to the finish. Yet when 20 years later, the Greeks (who after all should know) protested to the International Federation, they were thanked for their trouble (of course) and told that 42,195 metres (26 miles 385 yards) had now become the "traditional distance." Tradition my 30.5 centimetres (1 foot)!

One of the most tense races at Cardiff should be the mile. If only Great Britain had adopted the metric system all this four-minute-mile-mania would have been avoided. Then the

public would have continued to be more interested in the racing than the record. As it is, with three members of the Time Barrier Club, England's Brian Hewson—an anagram for He's won: is this prophetic?—Herbert Elliott (Australia) and his fellow Australian Mervyn Lincoln in that final on the last day of the athletics, most people will be disappointed if once more and for about the fortieth time four minutes is not broken.

As Eliza Doolittle sings, "Wouldn't it be lovely . . . ?" if stop-watches and measuring tapes were abolished at all sports meetings and we thus returned to the primary object of contests to find the winner, not to see how fast he ran or how far he jumped. Another thing I would do if I were a dictator would be to permit only a six-hour week for athletes to train.

Fortunately I am not a dictator, and therefore much as I may theoretically deplore this craze for records (we had it in my day but were much more reasonable in our demands, of course) I continue to get excited by them. A distance of 170 feet would guarantee you a win in the hammer in the 1920s. To-day the victor in the Empire Games will almost certainly throw that 16 lb. missile over 200 feet, for two of the competitors, Muhammad Iqbal from Pakistan, and England's own Empire record holder Mike Ellis, have already exceeded that distance.

In the 1920s the world record for the 120 yards hurdles was 14.4 sec. You might think to run 120 yards in that time and negotiate ten 3 ft. 6 in. obstacles as well was fast enough in all conscience. You would be wrong. A time of 14.4 sec. won't rank you in the first fifty in the world nowadays, and the Empire Champion, Keith Gardner from Jamaica, is most likely to win again in round about 14 sec. at Cardiff.

When in 1927 Lord Burghley (now the Marquess of Exeter) won the 440 yards hurdles in 54.2 sec. he equalled the world record. At Cardiff I expect the winner—two Olympic finalists, David Lean (Australia) and Gerhardus Potgieter (South Africa) will be there—to beat Burghley's time by at least 3 seconds.

In the pole vault something over 14 ft. will be required for victory. 14 ft. was a world record up to 30 years ago. Now 16 ft. is near at hand, and more

than fifty people in the world beat 14 ft. last year.

I still enjoy relay racing as much as anything, for I am sentimental at heart and prefer team events to individual effort. The relay events at Cardiff should provide the keenest competition.

But don't imagine, as did a lady companion of mine at the White City recently, that the runners who hand over the baton ought to finish. She observed that she had never seen so many people drop out of a race.

And I welcome the ladies, who now

are at long last accepted as just as important in athletic competition as their male counterparts.

There are no "mixed" events, though for my part I would like to see a mixed relay race. One day it may come—but not just yet.

Bread and Cymric Circuses

By GWYN THOMAS

CARDIFF flexes its muscles for its biggest commotion since the Normans clanked in and created a zone of jumpiness that still persists in the hills to the north. After surviving storms of bardry, methane, penillion singing, denominational rabies, a guilt-sense inflamed by a thousand entranced shamans, and periodical trimming by the hatchetmen of the temperance bodies, Wales now offers its capital as a home for the Empire's athletes. This sense of being a hub will restore some fragment of our lost nationhood and will probably increase the rates in some of the more energetic townships that have gone in for extra flags and window boxes.

Despite a granitic inertia among the great majority of the residents the air is hotter with a sense of preparation than at any time since the Syndicalists planned to seize Cardiff Castle in 1909 and, after a short argument with the incumbent marquis, to use it as a pamphlet manufactory. New running-tracks have been laid at Cardiff in defiant answer to those people who claim that the average track in Wales is laid half with grass and half with lead-shot. Ever since the climactic bits of running we did from the efficient louts who drove us westward we have had a tendency to slow things down. A love of athletics has taken no deep root in our land. Since the ice-cap of puritan morality formed around our hot pagan temples we have generally chosen to regard anyone loping along at a fast pace as being up to no good, and the diaconate would station scouts to flag him down to a modest amble.

Also, the minimal clothes worn by athletes in action were viewed with mistrust. It was thought by the harriers of the libido that clothes must be of a cut and thickness to suggest an inhibiting cage. The general feeling was that what awaited man was best to be

approached at a slow walk and with every button checked. The prospect did not call for trotting and short knicks.

The sort of athletic events that I recall as occurring most frequently in my boyhood were the Whitsun walks for men over forty. I am not sure about that age qualification but the competitors, as they turned out in their inaccurately tailored vests and pants, always struck me as being life-broken and sad with age. There was always a large field, for many of the walkers regarded this as a good chance of leaving the village with a legitimate public excuse and never came back.

The only runner who left a legend behind him was Guto Nyth Bran, the astonishing shepherd boy who for two hundred years has been safe from breathlessness in a moss of myth. He was born on a hillside opposite that on which that other frail magician, Jimmie Wilde, grew up. The Rhondda slopes, if you run up and down them at any speed, will do one of two things for you; they will give you the curved leg-style of the corgi, take inches off your height and give you a vaguely parenthetical air, or they will give you

a footwork that will baffle the world. Guto and Wilde are the prime examples of the sole benefit we have derived from having been expelled from the flat lands. Guto's father would often send him to retrieve a scampering and vagrant lamb, and Guto, swift as an arrow and probably just as myopic, would come back with a hare. This happened so often his father thought he was being perverse and was about to chide him when he realized that he was looking at the fastest Celt since Pwyll Hir, who was the first man to reach Cardigan Bay when the Danes started to get in our hair. Members of the Welsh A.A.A. who stand guard over the amateur wholesomeness of the Games at Cardiff have been known to faint on hearing of the betting fever released by Guto. His legs were the surest prospect of gain since latching on to Henry Tudor on the trek from Milford. The chicane and mayhem that attended his last races would suggest that the great religious rebirth of the eighteenth century did not come a moment too soon.

But Cardiff this month will stick out its chest and jangle its bells in an effort to dispel the psychoses we inherited from





"Mind you, he was all right till he did his victory lap . . ."

awryly bitched-up past. The decorations that have appeared in the streets are still in a state of pubescent shyness and have been taken by people out of touch with the furore to mean that the number of bus stops has been doubled. Efforts will be made to launder the slow and sombre Taff. The rowing events will take place on Lake Padarn in the far north if the Liverpool Corporation does not whip the water right from under them in the middle of a stroke. These events have to be held there, for there is not a river in South Wales negotiable by any craft other than a shallow coracle. There will be weight-lifting at Barry, as if things were not already confused enough in that schizophrenic borough, torn between demands for a third tide daily to buck up business at the languishing dock and the brash revelries of Barry Island. A whole section of the vast R.A.F. station at St. Athan has been organized to house the athletes, and most people agree that it is nice to see at least a part of this raped and sterile acreage devoted to an end that is wholly un sinister. Armies of Boy Scouts will be recruited as runners and messengers, and it is always good to see youth panting

and absorbed. At Trecysgod a great flight of pigeons will be released, specially trained and injected with a wish never to return to the home loft. This is to prove that Wales has at last severed her last link with her old plaguey parochialism. In the journalists' booths that will spring up like the articulate fungi around the arenas special hormone-sprays are being distributed for use on the older clichés.

And Cardiff will make her first big bow as capital of Wales. About the whole business of Cardiff's status as our queen-city there is a curious lack of resonance. Both Cardiff and Barry, bearing a strong strain of Somersetshire peasantry and a tendency to catarrh that hinders singing, are about as unWelsh as can be. The average Cardiffian regards the Welsh of the hill country with as abrasive a contempt as he would have felt, as a menial of the Fitzherberts, for the bands of Ivor Bach, a brazen insurgent who pioneered subsidence in this zone by tunnelling his way from Castell Coch to Cardiff Castle, a long trip when done underground. The most characteristic thing about the city—the castle itself—most Welsh people regard as a tedious and alien landmark. And for a capital there are defects in her catering arrangements that will send some of our Empire visitors limping back to their fastnesses with a feeling of regret that they didn't pull out of the thing as decisively as Washington and Franklyn. Frankly, I have proposed with all solemnity that any visitor who gets a drink on a Sunday without benefit of club-card or jemmy should be awarded a bonus-point for his national team. A good last item for the whole feast could be a relay race between a team of outraged hedonists from without and a platoon of last-ditch Sabbatarians from within, the baton being usable as an offensive weapon at each stage.

Last Saturday I saw a poster advertising the special-effects show *Son et Lumière*. "Sound and Light. Every day, July 18th—September 8th. Except Sunday." You can't get more basic than that.

Among those Judging

By R. G. G. PRICE

SCHOOLS take athletics seriously now, but it was different in my youth. In those days the order of events for the Hilary Term was football, influenza, sports heats, sports finals, though occasionally a House would steal a march on its still rugger-minded rivals by making its white hopes rise early and run round the track, if this had been marked out before the Day. Training, and even heats *in situ*, meant

an almost professional attitude in a school. A friend of mine once taught in a school where heats were run in the school hall.

To the ordinary boy of my time the sports meant primarily a new opportunity for observing the staff. On the programme would be a masthead fitting them all out with unnecessary offices, and out there in the middle of the ring they would huddle, like the massed

backstage help of an amateur dramatic society. For three hours they would try to behave naturally, chaffing one another as though unaware that they were being pointed out to the parents who would be grilling them as soon as they left the shelter of the ropes. Sometimes two men would break away from the group, usually men in plus-fours, and get the tape unknotted just as the runners arrived to use it. Very learned masters, normally seen only by scholarship candidates, would generally be muffled in long overcoats and carry umbrellas and wear hats like Crocker-Harris in the film of *The Browning Version*. (This hat was the highest point ever reached by British film wardrobing). One or two harassed prefects tried to keep the judges out of the way of the competitors, who always seemed to arrive from the direction the judges least expected.

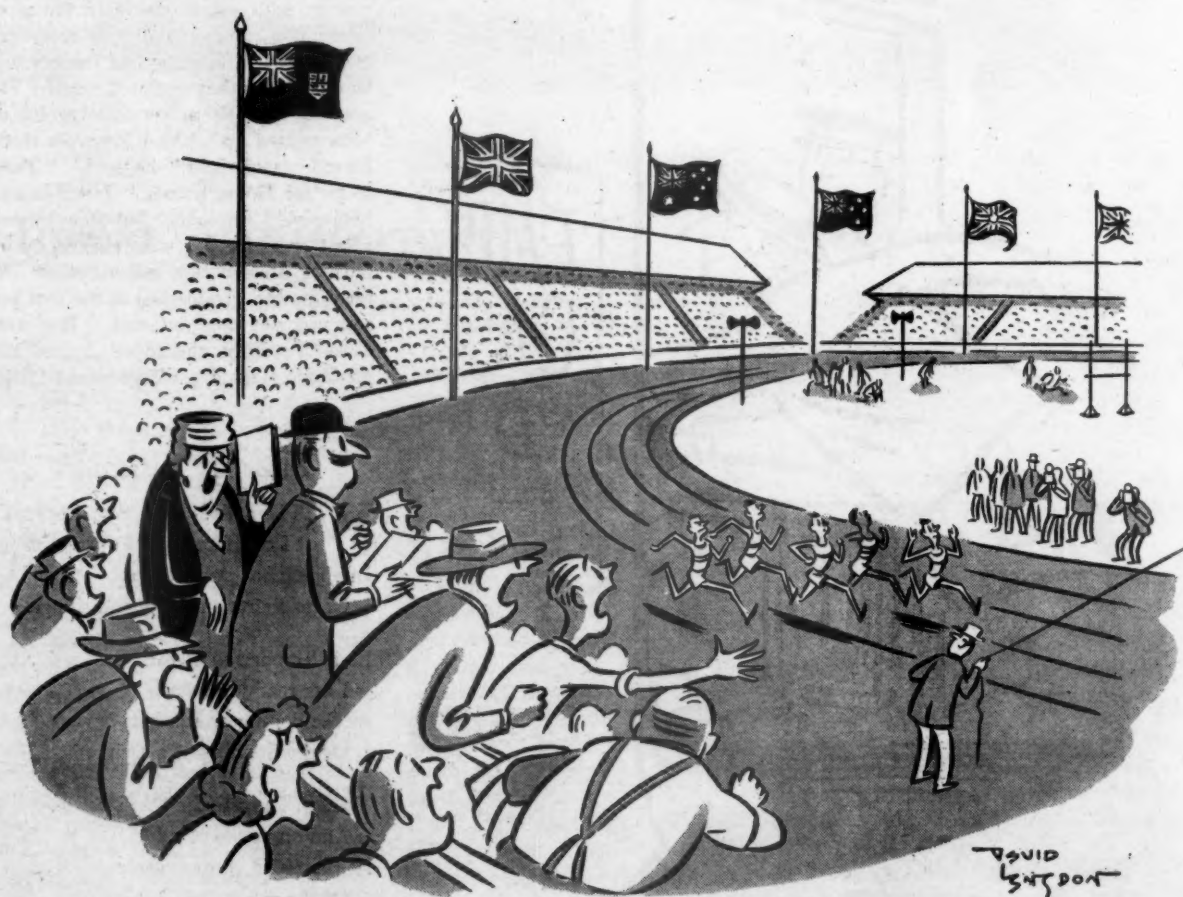
When I drifted across the great

divide and became a master myself I did not at first have any direct sporting responsibilities. I did not, for example, have a school team to run. My loyalties were allotted to an athletic House but I had much the same relationship to it as a bandmaster to his regiment. When all hands were needed in a crisis mine was one of the pairs that had to be found a job. Usually my activities were limited to turning up at House finals and shouting "Keener, keener," and writing an inspirational bit at the beginning of the House Notes in the school magazine. This was rather like a hymn with the metre left out and the name of the House substituted for the Deity.

The school in which I taught took the sports far more seriously than my old school. The staff tended to fill in the long evenings after *The Times* crossword was completed by elaborating organization. There were long-standing rivalries between Houses and there was

also a man who was a keen amateur statistician, and altogether the sports kept us mentally alert for weeks. Once there was a close argument about whether the absence of the school's best runner should be allowed for. He was competing in some rather important athletic event in London and his house-master claimed that he should not be penalized, because he was, after all, bringing credit to the school. His ghostly presence should be held to have arrived first in all races for which he was entered. The statistician objected that this would make timing altogether too notional. Should he also be held to have broken the school record for each event?

The boys liked Sports Day. There was a band and bunting and a tent with two masters noted for the precision of their markbooks in it to keep the score. Runners from the judges brought them the results and these they worked away at and just before tea announced which



"I simply can't bear to see any one of them beating the other."

of the four Houses was Cock. The little boys were livelier than ever, rightly guessing that they were unlikely to be beaten up in public and also that after the revels masters would feel too flat to carry out threats. Big boys looked menacingly mature and walked about with girls in a way that showed they considered the staff would do badly in competition with them. Two grave, withdrawn boys paced round the perimeter like the anti-compulsory games martyrs of a previous generation, but they were, in fact, collecting bets. There was always uncertainty over whether, if it turned wet, the headmaster would

gaily cancel the proceedings and let the parents turn up to find normal work in progress.

In my first year I was given a roving commission to judge anything that came near me. There were enough masters to cover essential work and I was kept inside the ropes only for bulk—the school was “fully staffed”—and for fear that parents might get at me. On a later occasion there was a staff shortage and I had to be used. The junior post in the athletics hierarchy is judging fourth place in the hundred yards. This is, in fact, most difficult work as you have to look at the first, second and third to

know which the fourth place is before you can decide who has filled it, and competitors in the race generally arrive together. A colleague ruined my work in the first heat by advising me to work forward from the stragglers and eliminate. In the second heat I simply advanced with my runner and by questioning the survivors and cross-checking their stories managed to construct a pretty accurate picture of what had occurred. I did not do so well the third time as my runner was taking my results and I missed one or two competitors whom he would certainly not have overlooked. (The system meant that unless your runner was exceptionally fleet, in which case he would have been competing, he was away rather a lot.)

I came to the notice of the central organization when the man judging third began sending in the names of my fourths as his selection; his runner was slightly faster than mine. The headmaster, who was hovering in the tent, heard the comments of the recorders and offered to visit me and inspect my work, an offer they accepted readily. He reached me just as yet another lot of boys panted up. “You must get these fourth places right,” he said. “They count for House points.” Irritable and bemused I replied “But they move about so.” Soon I was relieved by an old boy dressed as a motor-cyclist. At tea a mother complained to me that her son was not taught Greek. Her own classical studies, she added, helped her greatly in managing a large block of flats.



Pièce de Résistance

WITH a five-piece Sun-Creation
I can face what Fortune brings
In an endless permutation
Of its shorts and tops and things.

Be it Ritz or rod or racket
I am ready in a flash
At the doffing of a jacket
Or the donning of a sash;

Though I must admit frustration
And an agony of mind
At the awful contemplation
Of the piece I left behind.

HAZEL TOWNSON



"This isn't the way I imagined it."

Floreat Ministerium!

By B. A. YOUNG

A peep into the day when the Victory for Socialism group have fulfilled their plan to take over the public schools

SO you're at Eton, are you, comrade, heh-heh?

Why do you say "comrade" in that extraordinary way?

Well, it must be a bit different there since the Labour Government took it over, I imagine.

Oh, I suppose it is. Thank God I didn't know what it was like before.

But surely—

Of course it may not have been as bad as it sounds, but it must have been a bit off when anyone who had enough money could send their children there just by putting their names down. And those terrible little cads they used to send as guinea-pigs at one period, with no proper people and a tendency to eat curry with a knife and fork. I can't imagine how ghastly it was.

There weren't many guinea-pigs, as you call them.

I didn't call them, it was Warren Chetham-Strode. Anyway, it's perfectly all right now, because Stephen Swinger's made it impossible for anyone to get in unless he's a decent fellow. Actually, what he said was that boarding schools were to be provided for children who needed them on social or emotional grounds. I don't know how many of the fellows here actually claim to have got into Eton on emotional grounds, unless it means that they made a frightful stink when they were told they'd been put down for Harrow or Winchester or somewhere; but I do know that on social grounds most of them need it very much.

But if the Ministry of Education said they were to go to Harrow, how could they get it changed so that they went to Eton?

Well, Stephen Swinger arranged for that. He said parents should be allowed

freedom of choice where the freedom is important, and going to Eton is important, I should have said, wouldn't you?

But he also said that it shouldn't be allowed where the acquisition of arbitrary privilege was the object of the choice.

I can't imagine what he meant by arbitrary privilege, but whatever it is you don't get any of it at Eton. It's different at Winchester, where I believe you get colours for politics.

Aren't you exaggerating a bit?

Well, how do you explain Dick Crossman, and Douglas Jay, and Hugh Gaitskell, and Stephen Swinger—

Come now, you must get your facts right. Mr. Swinger was at Stowe.

What's Stowe?

It's a school. A public school.

Well, it only goes to show how underprivileged I am not to know all these

things. Anyway, things are a jolly sight better at Eton since it's been administered by the Ministry of Education.

How, for instance?

It's more democratic, for one thing. At m'shop steward's—

I beg your pardon?

It would have been "m'tutor's" in your time, I suppose. Anyway, m'shop steward leaves quite a lot of discipline to the Library, which is a sort of National Executive of the boys. Well, not a National Executive, really; that would be Pop.

Good heavens, you don't really mean that you still have Pop?

Did you have it? I didn't know Eton was so democratic in your day.

But surely democracy is just what Pop doesn't stand for. Surely Pop stands for arbitrary privilege if anything does.

It stands for Popular Overseers' Presidium, actually. I thought it was one of the things. Stephen Swinger brought in. Most of the good things are. I believe before the Government took it over the place was terribly uncomfortable—a little room you'd hardly put a housemaid in at home, and the bath-water always tepid, and so on.

And it's better now?

Oh, it really isn't at all bad now. You see, what happened after the

Swinger Act was first passed was that a whole lot of sort of working-class boys turned up before they discovered that they weren't really suited to it on emotional grounds, and they took one look at the place and hurried back to their sordid little homes on the next bus. So they had to make it at least tolerably comfortable, and make the food a bit less poisonous, so that these funny little numbers could be persuaded to stay. Not that they were persuaded, actually, after it was explained to them that they could only see their mums during the holidays and at Long Leave and so on; but they had to try.

I see. But it must have put the fees up enormously.

Oh, there aren't any fees. After the Swinger Act all the endowments of all the public schools were sort of vested in either the Ministry of Education or the Charity Commissioners for the benefit of education generally, sort of, and Eton was really quite well endowed and it costs rather a lot to run, so they just earmarked its endowments and used them for the college. And of course it gets all the usual grants that go to State Schools, whatever they are—I'm a bit vague about it. But I know we do all right. I believe the Director-General actually got a rise.

Who's that?

The Provost, I think he used to be called.

I don't believe I'd know the place if I went back.

Oh, but you'd like it. It's terribly enlightened and democratic. There's a frightfully good system we have called fagging.

But—

It's based on the old apprenticeship system, you see. A boy is attached to an older boy and does odd jobs for him and so on while he's learning. M'shop steward says it's an ideal blend between the contemporary and the traditional.

And what do you suppose Mr. Swinger thinks of all these reforms of his?

Oh, I should think he'd be enormously pleased, wouldn't you? It's all worked out so well, hasn't it?

How Sweet it is to Potter

HOW sweet it is to potter,
Be busy but at rest,
To stand, or stroll, or totter
About the little nest,
And do a simple job or two
That you have meant for months to do,
To move some books from here to there,
To paint a table, mend a chair,
Or nail that carpet on the stair—
How sweet it is to potter!

How sweet it is to potter,
Like rabbits in a wood!
One does not feel a rotter
For one is doing good.
How thrilling when the fit begins
The hunt for nails or drawing-pins!
How pleasant when the deed is done
To contemplate another one—
And, if it can't be found, what fun!
How sweet it is to potter!

How sweet it is to potter
At any needless chore
When lying on the blotter
Are letters by the score!
And while you weed, or mow the
sward,
The telephone should be ignored:
Yes, when you hear the horrid bell
You sweep another leaf and yell
"I'm pottering—you go to hell!"—
How sweet it is to potter!

A. P. H.



Essence of Parliament



THERE was a good party knock-about on pensions on Monday, and on Wednesday Mr. Anthony Greenwood, speaking for the consumer, startled a desperately thin House with the threat that if the advertisements said that he need not iron his shirt one might as well argue on the same principle that he need not brush his hair. The thought of Mr. Greenwood with unbrushed hair is one that would indeed herald the breaking of nations. The Lords, with the shadow of coming women heavy upon them, had two quite good debates—one on Cyprus and one on information services—neither of which (through no fault of their lordships) got us very much further. But in the main it has been a Whips-off week. The Whips were off on Ardwick cemetery; and North-country Conservatives, Mr. Eric Johnson and Colonel Bromley-Davenport, took the opportunity to lay about one another good and proper. But that was a fight where only Lancashire and Cheshire were allowed to join in. What business is it of other people where Manchester men are buried? The real dust-up was on privilege on Tuesday.

Debates when the Whips are off make by general admission the best debates. This does not necessarily prove that the Whips are dreadful fellows or that the party system is all wrong. It is simply that when there is a free vote the speech can have an effect. But it does prove that there is plenty of ability in the House if only it is allowed to have a run for its money. Nor is it merely a question of the back-benchers being brighter than the front benchers. Though there were some admirably sensible speeches from the back benches (Mr. Deedes from one side and Mr. Houghton from the other, and supporting casts behind them) the

victors' palms were certainly carried off by two Privy Councillors, Mr. Herbert Morrison and the Attorney-General. Mr. Morrison stated the plain man's case that Parliament's prestige was damaged if privilege was claimed where it was not necessary, and that Mr. Strauss's was a case where its claim was not necessary. The Attorney-General stated the lawyer's case—that his colleagues on the Committee of Privileges had not done their homework, that they had misunderstood the precedents on which they had relied, as had the Committee of Privileges of 1939 before them, and that, whatever ought to be, there was no doubt about it that Mr. Strauss's action was not in fact "a proceeding in Parliament."

Mr. Morrison and the Attorney, whether by accident or arrangement, made between them a formidable two-man band, and by the time they had finished with all the interrupters who were popping up all around them there was no answer to Mr. Houghton's contention that there was at least a reasonable doubt whether there was here a breach of privilege, and that therefore the House

would be ill-advised to commit itself by resolution which had no statutory effect to an interpretation that might not be upheld by the courts.

Mr. Chuter Ede, Mr. Clement Davies and Mr. Gaitskell, members of the Committee of Privileges, did not like it a little bit. Why should they? Who does enjoy being proved wrong in public? Mr. Clement Davies thought it the greatest blow that had been struck against liberty in three hundred years. We must admit that we can think of greater. It is said to be the first time

that the House has ever turned down the advice of the Committee of Privileges, and indeed it is bound to raise the question whether the Committee of Privileges as now constituted is a body that can be trusted. The Committee consists, now as always, of some of the senior and most respected members of the House, but also some of the busiest. It seems pretty clear that they just have not the time to master the extreme intricacies of privilege law, and the question will certainly be raised whether those duties must not be entrusted to younger and expert rather than to veteran and in-expert hands.

Meanwhile the Attorney-General, who has not been invariably praised in the newspapers, has certainly the right to sit back and sun himself at his single-handed triumph over his colleagues from both sides of the House, and only the most ungenerous would stint their congratulations. It was a strange and dramatic scene as Members trooped through their three repetitive divisions, and each time the anti-privilege tellers came to the right side of the Table to announce their victory. The Chief Whip hurried in from voting against Mr. Butler's motion. Mr. Gaitskell indulged in animated conversation with the Speaker. Mr. Butler looked at his finger nails as if he found them infinitely boring. Mr. Strauss, like the knight-at-arms, sat alone and palely loitering, and Mr. Morrison, in a curious bulging suit and with some floppy slippers, bustled out of the Chamber flanked on each side by a congratulating Tory. Mr. Chuter Ede looked after him as if he did not like him very much.

Parliament, it seemed, had come to life again and had at last taken a decision that meant something.

PERCY SOMERSET



Mr. Herbert Morrison



Mr. George Strauss



In the City

Low-Down on the Slowdown

LET us turn the telescope on the American recession. "The economy at midyear is marking time, with the downturn arrested but no indication as yet of a vigorous recovery"; so writes the usually urbane but obviously foxed author of the Monthly Letter of the First National City Bank of New York. He is not the only authority who cannot see clearly the direction in which the next move will take the American economy. Read, for example, the economist of U.S. Steel Corporation, who takes as his theme two neat double negatives: a U.S. Commerce Department report that "Sales figures show an easing up of the rate at which business is easing off," and an equally forthright remark from no less a person than President Eisenhower that "There is a noticeable slowing up of the slowdown." Here is the steel man's development of these basic themes:

"In order to clarify the cautious terminology of the experts it should be noted that a slowing up of the slowdown is not as good as an upturn in the down curve, but it is a good deal better than either a speedup of the slowdown or a deepening of the down curve; and it does suggest that the climate is about right for an adjustment to the readjustment.

"For the steel industry, it appears that the past build-up in customers' input has caused the present drop-off in steel output, which is to say that because customers did not put in more, the steel producers put out less. This, of course, caused a short-term descent in the long-term ascent.

"Turning to unemployment, we find a definite decrease in the rate of increase, which clearly shows that there is a letting up of the letdown. Of course, if the slow-down should speed up, the decrease in the rate of increase unemployment would turn into an increase in the rate of decrease of employment. In other words, the deceleration would be accelerated.

"But the indicators suggest rather a leveling off, referred to on Wall Street as bumping along rock bottom. This

will be followed by a gentle pickup, then a faster pickup, a slowdown of the pickup, and finally a leveling off again.

"However, it is hard to tell before a slowdown is completed whether the pickup is going to be fast, particularly because of such factors as the strength of recovery in the downturn and the power of decline in the upturn."

After the blinding revelation of this *tour d'horizon* it is reassuring to turn to some more concrete items of news suggesting that in Britain the downturn has not yet taken us completely out of our depth. The near miracle of our situation is still the readiness of a world in recession to buy our goods. Exports keep up while the cost of our imports is falling, and the balance moves further and further into the black. Within the over-all progress of this battle of the balance payments here are some notable recent victories:

In the Country



Baiting the Trap

THE sight of the first basket of plums sent our minds back to last winter when we thought at first that we had escaped the "plague of bullfinches" that was reported to have descended on the Weald of Kent then. We were, in fact, feeling rather smug about it. There had been plenty of rain and it looked as if we might well have a nice fat crop to put on an attractively lean market. But the little blighters filtered through. First in tens, then in twenties, then in fitches of fifty, they twittered round our orchards like banshees.

This was something new. Nagging winds and a late May frost are old enemies, and we had put up a lewelling screen to blunt the teeth of the one and had oil flares ready to mollify the other. But now, it seemed, there might be nothing for them to protect. Here were our bud blossoms all being gobbled up as so many snacks, never to burgeon again, while each was capable, if given the chance, of producing enough food for a thousand finches at least. (One finch, it is reckoned, can eat thirty buds a minute, the potential source of some two hundred plums.) It was only the plums and pears the birds fancied,

Vickers Armstrong have sold more Viscounts to Australia, the U.S.A. and Eire. Total Viscount sales to date, 383.

Decca Radar are supplying the radar equipment for Stockholm and Gothenburg airports. This order was gained in open international competitive tender.

Folland Aircraft have sold more "Gnats" to Yugoslavia, India and Finland.

Matthew Hall & Co. are designing the first synthetic rubber plant in Holland.

Automatic Telephone & Electric are installing the radio-telephone equipment for Bahrain Petroleum Co.

Leyland Motors are continuing to scatter their trucks and buses all over the world: Argentina, Poland, India, Singapore, Spain are among recent destinations.

The Union Jack still flies handsomely in world markets. LOMBARD LANE

though; the cherry and apple buds, thank heaven, did not appeal to them.

There was no time to discuss the cause; we had to act at once. We bought some patent repellent and frantically sprayed it over all our trees, and we put out wire cage-traps, and Will got out his four-ten and blazed away like fury. It all seemed very Hitlerian, and I was glad to leave him to it.

In the end most of our buds were saved, but it was an expensive victory, for the £5 Will spent on cartridges was barely a quarter of the cost of the spray—which the birds seemed to love. Though the traps cost us nothing, only one of them made a good catch, the result, Will said, of his capture of one of the little beggars, which he put inside to entice the others. If only he had had a few more live decoys...

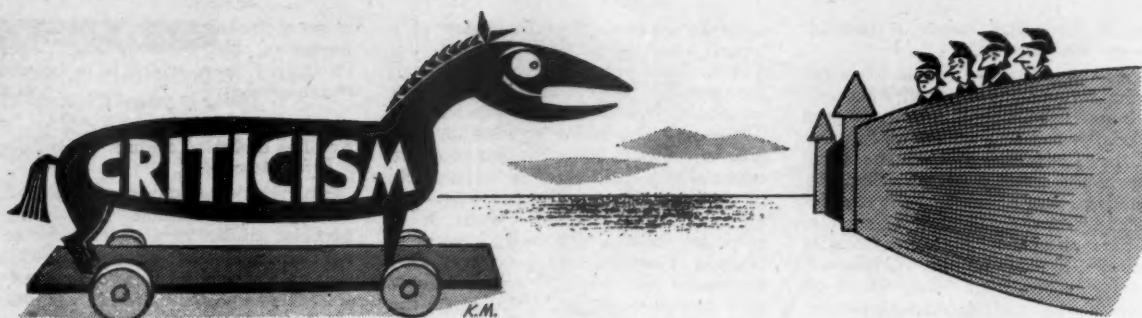
I noticed Will rummaging about during the nesting season, climbing trees and peering into bushes, but I did not realize what he was up to until I called round at his cottage. All round his front parlour fledgling finches were hopping perkily about in cages. Our traps won't lack bait next time; but don't worry, the captives were not to be slaughtered. They were going to be taken away and let out on—but I had better not say where.

GREGORY BLAXLAND

"Housewife picked up adder in kitchen at Highcliff, Hampshire—in mistake for sausage. She was not bitten."

Daily Mail

How about the adder?



BOOKING OFFICE

Gone to the Devil

Goethe's *Faust*. A Literary Analysis. Stuart Atkins. Harvard: O.U.P. 35/-

MOST people faced with having to tell the story of *Faust* without previous preparation would fall back on Gounod's opera—Gounod, perhaps backed up by Berlioz. Some would have seen a production of Marlowe's *Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*, performed probably by undergraduates. These latter might even hazard the line "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships?" Few indeed in this country are likely to have seen or read in its entirety Goethe's drama in two parts, although a much shortened version was given, I believe, at the Old Vic about thirty-five years ago.

Yet Goethe's *Faust* is, as Mr. Stuart Atkins points out, really big stuff. It may not always come off, but it is an effort to examine from two quite different approaches the whole career of a brilliant egotistical man. Goethe began it when he was twenty-five and finished it when he was eighty-two; so that the play may reasonably be called a life's work. *Faust* is not, Mr Atkins insists, a "sort of animated and articulated historical generalization," the play is a "drama of character, and not, as has too long been assumed, an unhappy mixture of character drama and allegorical pageantry."

The *Faust* legend which has fascinated so many writers derives from an apparently historical figure, probably living at the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century, a magician and adventurer, said to have sold his soul to the Devil for twenty-four years in return for being given during that period all he desired. At the appointed time the Devil appeared, strangled him, and removed him to hell.

No one who has seen Marlowe's play or Gounod's opera can fail to feel that *Faust* himself extracted extraordinarily

little out of his bargain. In the former he was allowed what amounted to the brief sight of Helen of Troy on television: in the latter he gets a village girl into trouble and leaves her in the lurch, a situation which could perfectly well have arisen without the elaborate supernatural machinery which is brought into operation. We may feel that this shabby treatment is all part of the Devil's cunning, but it does not leave us with much opinion of *Faust* himself, either as magician or man of action.

In Goethe's work both these aspects of *Faust's* bought experience—the fantastic and the ordinary—are seen far

more intelligibly in relation to each other; although few would allege that Part II is easily understood. "That *Faust II* is particularly difficult," says Mr. Atkins, "is a critical commonplace which some recent critics attempt to refute by simply asserting the opposite."

Goethe himself took the line that too much speculation on the subject was a mistake. "Germans," he said, "are strange people. By their profound thoughts and ideas, which they look for everywhere and which they insert into everything, they burden their lives more than is proper . . . They come and ask what idea I have tried to embody in my *Faust*. As if I knew and could state it myself! . . . It would have been a fine thing indeed if I had wanted to string on to a single all-embracing idea a life so rich, so colourful, and so extremely diversified as that which I have represented in *Faust*."

This seems to show the really good sense of a great man and, incidentally, is rather a good answer to a lot of current nonsense talked about writing.

Interesting as Mr. Atkins's book is, it requires considerable concentration to follow its argument, which is that *Faust* is a figure like *Oedipus* or *Hamlet*, the victim of his own efforts to live nobly and heroically in an imperfect world. At the same time, although *Faust's* experiences mirror other men's experiences, he remains *Faust* as much as Mr. Micawber remains Mr. Micawber.

Over and above that there are of course all kind of other extraordinary facets to Goethe's *Faust*. It escaped from the French classical tragedies of Racine and Corneille. It entered into, and yet at the same time reacted from, the Romantic Movement of Goethe's own time. Finally, Mr. Atkins quotes Gide's entry about *Faust* in his journal: "Everything in it is saturated with life." There is absolutely no doubt that we should all make an effort to read it. Unfortunately, I seem to possess only Part II.

ANTHONY POWELL

NOVEL FACES



XXV—C. H. B. KITCHIN

*Death of My Aunt was tactfully contrived,
A crime His Uncle full ten years survived.*

Peace in Piccadilly. Sheila Birkenhead.
Hamish Hamilton, 25/-

Albany, the "narrow arcade of chambers that forms a sort of private thoroughfare between Piccadilly and Burlington Gardens" was once, we are told in this book by Lady Birkenhead, the town house of the worldly Lady Melbourne. She tells us also of some of the unquiet lives led by the more illustrious bachelors who have occupied the different sets of chambers—Byron, Lytton, Gladstone, Macaulay among them—lives which go to make the story and the charm of Albany, and she tells the story with affection. Even though we may belong to those Lower Orders of Passengers whom the forbidding gates and watchmen were instituted to keep out, and even though we always regret not being able to take a short cut from Savile Row to Piccadilly, and sometimes speak ignorantly of the Albany, we find ourselves very readily sharing Lady Birkenhead's affection for one of London's more endearing anachronisms. The book is well illustrated but no picture shows us inside an apartment to-day. A glimpse we were once permitted behind one of the great oak doors suggests that this is a pity. R. G.

Young Man in the Sun. Peter Greave.
Eyre and Spottiswoode, 15/-

We have read novels about the misadventures of salesmen during the slump, also novels about India, before: Mr. Greave, however, is the first writer to combine the two genres, together with a serio-comic study of a penurious adolescent suffering the torments and ecstasies of first love. The nineteen-year-old narrator, "a Sahib of sorts," bearing the author's own pseudonym, attempts (abortively) to sell refrigerators at a "retaining fee" of 75 rupees a month (commission, seldom earned: nearly two hundred chips); and falls at first sight for an insolvent glamour-girl called Jobina, who speaks "swift, scathing Hindi" and has the longest legs he'd ever seen; there are Anglo-Indian colleagues and Mr. Prasad to contend with: the epicene prospective customer (addicted to "Professor Gupta's Potency Pills. As supplied to Ruling Houses") who is responsible for his final—and not altogether unpredictable—disillusionment. The scabrous side of Calcutta, the author's birthplace, and rarely written about from the viewpoint of a European participant, comes over vividly: while life at Blenheim Lodge (off the Bali Road) makes Redbrick descriptions of sordid provincial digs seem, by comparison, like a sojourn at Arnold Bennett's *Imperial Palace*.

J. M-R.

Danger in the Air. Oliver Stewart.
Routledge and Kegan Paul, 28/-

In his preface Major Stewart says that air accidents can be both interesting and instructive. They are often also tragic, but the detailed examination that follows

naturally leads to the elimination of a hazard wherever possible. Air travel is thereby made progressively safer, though the element of human error always remains. Various types of accident are discussed. The author stresses that the pilot must rely upon the maintenance staff and he is entitled to the best possible co-operation from traffic controllers on the ground, particularly when it is necessary for him to be talked down by Ground Controlled Approach. One should not read this book solely to know what can go wrong and then expect the unexpected to happen on the next flight; the author goes a long way to show that the dangers on a scheduled passenger flight are no more than ordinary everyday risks. A. V.

The Later Herods: The Political Background of the New Testament.
Stewart Perowne. *Hodder and Stoughton, 25/-*

A sequel to the author's well-known *Life and Times of Herod the Great*, this vivid study sets familiar Biblical events in the context of the power politics of the Roman Empire. It describes the breakdown of the understanding established between the brilliant Herod the Great and Augustus, and the consequent incorporation of Judæa in the Empire as a procuratorial province in A.D.6. The attempt to assimilate the Jews into pagan civilization led to Titus's siege and destruction of Jerusalem in A.D.70.

These events, the background to the Gospels and to the Acts, are clearly described, in particular the roles of Antipas and Herod Agrippa. There is much that is unfamiliar: Pontius Pilate, recalled from Palestine in disgrace, probably committed suicide in Vienne; Varus, who afterwards lost the legions in Germany, was a successful ruler in Syria; the sinister but often statesman-like manoeuvres of Tiberias and the megalomania of Caligula were decisive at this turning point of history. With his knowledge of Levantine psychology and

grasp of the topography of Palestine and Jerusalem, Mr. Perowne has written a fascinating book which is to be widely recommended. J. E. B.

Achilles and the Tortoise. John Lincoln.
Heinemann, 18/-

This book, which is sub-titled "An Eastern Ægean Exploit," tells how Mr. Lincoln, thanks to a chance encounter with an Intelligence colonel in 1943, was sent on a special mission to a part of the world he had come to love in peace-time. Having been suitably instructed in the art of sabotage—in Cairo—and given the resounding title of Director of the Subversion of Enemy Troops in the Eastern Ægean, he was then told to get on with the job. Soon he was to meet Achilles, the mercurial, likeable but often exasperating guerrilla leader on Samos. Mr. Lincoln came to admire the reckless courage of the Greeks, but to view with dismay their alarming political disunity.

Whatever his frustrations—and a saboteur's lot is not a happy one, it seems—Mr. Lincoln never stopped loving the islands and their people. This affection is fully conveyed to the reader in a volume that is by no means just another "war book" heavy with place-names and forgotten soldiers. Rather it is an amusing and perceptive account of one man's war. R. G.

Orpheus in America. Offenbach's Diary, translated by Lander MacClintock. *Hamish Hamilton, 18/-*

In 1876 Offenbach, spoiled darling of every concert-hall and drawing-room in the Old World, was invited to the New to take part in the United States' centenary jollifications. The composer of innumerable monotonously successful operettas, he also fancied himself as a commentator on the foreign scene, producing a volume of his views on the American way of life shortly after his return to France. The original documents from which it was compiled—personal letters and a journal—have been lost or destroyed, and even the present translator admits that many of the names mentioned are so mis-spelled and distorted that they cannot be unscrambled or their owners identified.

The book is announced as "a fascinating glimpse of America." Glimpse is the operative word, and a somewhat expensive one, considering that it has already been seen in this country under the title *America and the Americans*. There are interesting comments on the "flagstone crossings" in busy streets (a much earlier solution of the pedestrian-traffic problem than our own Belisha beacons) and on a system under which the conductor of an important orchestra was thought fortunate that he could count on the permanent services of twelve out of his large body of players. J. D.



"I'm taking you off cornflakes!"

AT THE PLAY

Pericles (STRATFORD-UPON-AVON)
Classical Theatre of China
(ADELPHI)

Living for Pleasure (GARRICK)
The Joshua Tree (DUKE OF YORK'S)

I HOPE *Sceptre* will be better skippered, particularly in rough weather, than the ship so completely at sea in Tony Richardson's production of *Pericles* at Stratford. During the storm that saw Marina's birth four frenzied sailors keep up a mystifying game of cat's-cradle with old fishing-nets hanging from the shrouds. But less oblique criticism must object to the storm's success in swamping *Pericles'* manifold efforts to be heard. Carelessness with the words is the most serious flaw, not to be minimized, in a lively production that makes a good many mistakes but is never short of ideas for giving coherence to a patchy and difficult play. And under this head comes Gower. Mr. Richardson's notion of letting him tell the story, as if it were a folk-tale, to a group of sailors seemed sound; but when he carried it further to make him sing parts of his synopsis in an operatic bass, the result is disastrous, for most of the words are lost in the organ-rumble of Edric Connor's voice.

At first sight Loudon Sainthill's set gives the impression of a marine junk store, in which *Pericles* at Antioch is menaced by tridents in the Large Economy Size, but as the clutter clears it survives pretty well the demands of a cruise round most of Asia Minor, though Diana was later blotted out, from where I sat, by trailing flotsam. Mr. Sainthill's dresses are good. He meets with resource his itinerant appointment to court after court.

Richard Johnson goes through his ordeal very well as *Pericles*, with authority and as telling a suggestion of tragedy as the play will support (its coincidences pile up into a very awkward heap); and

REP SELECTION

Ipswich Theatre, *Picnic*, American comedy, to July 26th.

Dundee Rep, *A Tale of Two Spacemen*, new play, to July 26th.

Guildford Rep, *Cornelia*, Gordon Daviot, to July 19th.

Nottingham Playhouse, *Lucky Day*, to July 19th.

the scene in which he and Marina recognize one another, coming very quietly after the massed machinery of the storm, is extremely effective. We could hear, for one thing, and once again Geraldine McEwan's direct sincerity much more than outweighs the occasional side-step into the comic manner she is subduing so successfully at Stratford.

The kings are an imposing bunch. Most of all Mark Dignam's Simonides, in a red beard and funny hat that for a moment make one wonder if the League



Marina—GERALDINE MCEWAN

Pericles—RICHARD JOHNSON

of Empire Interrupters has once more beaten the doorman. On the brothel scene Mr. Richardson has really gone to town, warmly supported by Angela Baddeley as the Bawd and Patrick Wymark as the Pimp. It is a scarifying piece of Hogarth, and funnier than I remembered. The Second Gentleman gets a great laugh, surely planned by Shakespeare, at his "Come, I am for no more bawdy-houses. Shall's go hear the vestals sing?" Less planned, however, is the reception of *Pericles'* "I threw her o'erboard with these very arms," and something will have to be done about that.

The Classical Theatre of China (Peking; not Formosa) is here for six weeks, and to those jaded with the diet of Shaftesbury Avenue and ready for, so to speak, shark's-fin soup, I strongly recommend it. But the palate must be prepared for shocks. The conventions are out of our world entirely. Ladies of the court converse in a high, nasal, and, I confess, rather jarring whine. Mime is immeasurably more important than dialogue. Apparent simplicity disguises a tremendously complex code of significance, in which a thumb pointing to the north-east means one thing, a foot raised two

and a half inches from the ground another. The perfection of this code demands an apprenticeship that leaves the Comédie Française far behind. But even those seeing this company for the first time will be delighted by its novelty and quick to sense its peculiar skills. The acrobats are marvellous, the ballet movements charming, the economy of statement admirable. The dresses are a joy, and if the incidental music seems drawn mainly from kitchen pans, the little orchestra that takes the stage alone more than makes amends.

Living for Pleasure is a good-natured review, even a little old-fashioned, and rather refreshing for that. Arthur Macrae has written the whole of it, tuning in pretty closely to Dora Bryan's very personal wavelength, and though a number of items go slightly astray the total effect is gay and unpretentious and now and then the rafters are happily endangered. Miss Bryan is in terrific form, putting her own outrageous twist on her pop-eyed cockney floozies. In the sharpest rag to date of the Royal Court, a dustbin drama of inspissated dreariness, attacking the middle classes, brings three Kensington matrons furiously from the audience to rout the

company with their umbrellas and sing a rousing song of defiance—Miss Bryan, Patience Collier and George Rose. Miss Bryan winds up the programme memorably as an English spinster pursued round a Paris bedroom by a determined faun. There is neat satire in a grubby modern play saved from the Censor by being switched to period dress, and a gently pleasing wit in Daniel Massey's song as a Scottish Hyde Park shepherd, and in the little sketch of two Edwardian debs pointing the moral that good cooking wins in the end. Richard Addin-sell's music is cheerfully geared to an evening which Peter Rice decorated delightfully.

It is impossible to describe *The Joshua Tree*, by Alec Coppel, without giving away the massed surprises of its third act. Enough to say that these, verging on the absurd, exact too heavy a penalty in two acts of laborious and unconvincing preparation. Love, hate, cunning and downright idiocy unroll slowly in a dreadful Californian home, among characters who mean so little that they might have been cut from cardboard. Anne Baxter is given seven changes of dress and a few minutes of highly emotional acting, which she manages well. William Sylvester and Hugh McDermott bat bravely on a drying wicket, and I was momentarily cheered by a good small performance as a resolute police officer by Peter Halliday.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Duel of Angels (Apollo—30/4/58), chiefly for Vivien Leigh. *Expresso Bongo*

(Saville—30/4/58), musical satire on crooners, wittily led by Paul Scofield. *For Adults Only* (Strand—2/7/58), uneven but lively revue.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

A Night to Remember *The High Cost of Loving*

MY feelings about *A Night to Remember* (Director: Roy Baker) add up in the end to a sense of bafflement that it should have been made at all. This is the story of the sinking of the *Titanic* in 1912, and essentially no more than that. Although the synopsis begins by implying that the disaster is seen through the eyes of Second Officer Herbert Lightoller (Kenneth More), that is not the impression given by the film—and even if he seemed much more of a focus for the narrative than he does seem here, that would still not make it anything but a string of tiny incidents concerning a number of other people, the vast majority of them (this is the trouble) not very interesting people, because there is no time for us to find anything interesting in them. They are lay-figures, types, symbols invented to represent the people of that kind who may be presumed to have been on the *Titanic*: what is customarily called a "cross-section" of the 2,208 who were aboard. It is not easy to find absorbing entertainment in a story populated exclusively by imaginary members of a cross-section.

Great trouble and exertion must have gone into the making of this piece, but the regrettable truth is that the only

things in it I found interesting were certain oddments and curiosities of fact that I hadn't known or had forgotten—that another ship was within sight and could not be contacted, that "S.O.S." was then a new call and was not at first tried by the radio operator, and so on. This is the sort of thing, let's face it, that makes practically all the effect it can make by simply being read.

And as for the "human stories"... All the perfectly obvious illustrative examples turn up. Of course, the honeymoon couple; of course, the young mother and father and their beloved children; of course, the pompous man who shows cowardice in a crisis; of course, innumerable other type-figures you can visualize as soon as they are named—figures who must behave typically, must not do anything entertainingly unexpected. Each, to justify his or her few moments in the picture, must be a representative of a kind and not an individual. Are there really great numbers of moviegoers who take pleasure in seeing what they could quite well imagine for themselves?

I suppose there are—for I find to my astonishment that most critics seem to have been much impressed. My feeling about this sort of work is that it is a great waste of mechanical skill and effort. You can praise it as you might praise a feat of weight-lifting, and gasp at the thought of the trouble they must have taken to contrive all those torrents of water pouring about the place; but I don't understand how you can get any pleasure out of it as a story. A string of brief episodes about a cross-section of people simply does not make a story. It is as if, setting out to make a design, one tried to include equal amounts of all possible colours. It would get less interesting, literally greyer all over, the more accurately inclusive it was.

A simple unpretentious little domestic comedy that I found remarkably pleasing is *The High Cost of Loving* (Director: Jose Ferrer). The title might suggest something pretty raucous, but this is quiet, full of observation and intelligently amusing, with literate dialogue. The scene switches between the home of Jim Fry (Mr. Ferrer again) and his office, and the film opens with an excellent sequence showing the routine as he and his wife (Gena Rowlands) get up in the morning: ten minutes, extremely entertaining, before a word is spoken. Then he is cheered by the news that he is at last to become a father after nine years of marriage, but at the office he is dismayed by signs that seem to indicate he is to be sacked. Slight misunderstandings accumulate and reinforce each other, and he becomes very worried indeed before things work out happily in the end. There is little else to summarize in the story; but the piece is continuously entertaining and often funny, because of the good writing and direction and the



A Night to Remember

Mrs. Brown—TUCKER MCGUIRE

ironically observed details and characters (Jim Backus has a wonderfully comic scene as a hearty business man who talks entirely in metaphors). As a whole, too, it is attractive because of its credible picture of a genuinely happy marriage. I liked it very much.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

With *A Night to Remember* are two pleasing half-hour documentaries in colour. *Between the Tides* (Director: Ralph Keene) is about the animal and plant life on the beaches and rocks of the West coast: fascinating pictures, odd and beautiful, with a commentary written by Burns Singer that uses words imaginatively ("limpets clenching their small homes"); *The Travel Game* (Director: Tony Thompson) is more conventionally chatty, diversifying its travelogue pictures of a journey from Harwich to Holland, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland with guesses about several of the travellers. The simple but gripping *Ice Cold in Alex* (9/7/58) continues, and the very good *Western Man Hunt* ("Survey," 9/7/58), and *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57).

Best release: *Hot Spell* (25/6/58)—small-town family tensions, touching and amusing, very well done (Shirley Booth excellent).

RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE GALLERY

"You too may have a Crome"

Crome and Cotman, Agnew's
(Closes July 26)

Edward Lear, Arts Council,
4 St. James's Square, W.1
(Closes July 26)

OF the many to whom "Old Crome of the Norwich School" is something of a household word, comparatively few are familiar with his work. The reasons for this are twofold; first, the small number of his known works, approximately 100, only partly accounted for by his death when in his early fifties (1821); secondly, his several different approaches make it not always easy to spot a Crome.

On the one hand he was capable of bold designs freely handled, as his "Moonlight on the Yare," at the National Gallery, and "Moonlight on the Yare," at Agnew's show—the latter being, I suspect, under its thick veil of varnish and grime as much a masterpiece as the former. With intermediate stages he had, at the other end of the scale, a close-up manner with vegetation, based on meticulous Dutch flower paintings. This did not mark a highly personal sensibility to the subtle changes of cool greens and greys, or that English love of sparkling light which sometimes brought him close to Constable. I know of two likely, but unacknowledged, Cromes in private hands, and hope that this exhibition may be the means of bringing others to light.

As with Crome, Cotman is here only represented by oils. Cotman did, however, to voice a personal opinion, produce the finest water-colours ever done, and holding this view I find it hard to see anything in his oils to equal his best water-colours for clarity and delicacy of touch—taking the well-known, much-reproduced "Greta Bridge" at the British Museum as an example. This is not to say that there are not fine oils by Cotman, such as, here at Agnew's, Sir Martyn Beckett's "Boats at Anchor on Breydon Water," "Estuary with Boats" from the Tate Gallery or "From my father's house at Thorpe."

Considerable technical skill does not hide a certain heaviness of hand in Lear's serious painting and drawing, and he remains pre-eminently an exquisite humorist.

ADRIAN DAINTRY

ON THE AIR

Sound Politics

AMID the arguments about whether the various warring tribes of television are being fair to M.P.s not enough has been said about the effect of television on sound-radio politics; the wireless is becoming something like a serious political medium. The politician trying to project himself affably out of a seventeen-inch screen is all too conscious, to judge by the ones I've seen, that five-sixths of his audience would rather he was a nautch-girl. They stick him because of the hypnosis of the medium, not for his glittering eye and long grey argument.

By contrast, politicians on sound radio can assume that the large body of the incurious, the apathetic and the inane will abolish them with the turn of a knob before they've got beyond an imitative "My friends..." This leaves the smaller, if no more compact, body of people who actually want to listen to them. They can assume some knowledge of the subject, on the one hand, and on the other that a fair proportion of their audience have heard an issue being evaded before.

Curiously, the politicians for the most part seem to have noticed this more quickly than some of the semi-professional broadcasters. The other day I heard Mr. Gaitskell being questioned on the Labour Party's attitude to foreign affairs by two distinguished and experienced journalists; it was due to be a shortish broadcast, but one of them spent what seemed like an age putting the first question ("What is your position about Cyprus?" would have been a useful précis) in breathless stumbling phrases which sounded as though he had just run up five flights to the studio but was gallantly filling in time until Mr. Gaitskell arrived more sedately. On the screen, of course, it would have shown sincerity and eagerness.

A shibboleth or two apart, Mr.



Gaitskell didn't play much politics but put a fairly detailed and tenable position about Cyprus and the Lebanon, which was all they had time for, speaking as though to intelligent people. He made no bones about the difficulties, though one had to make allowances for the extra tinge of optimism that is to be expected from a Leader of the Opposition who knows he won't actually be called in to clear up the mess to-morrow.

Not all speakers are up to his standard, of course. I don't mean that they are stupider, but that many seem to feel that they can get away with more because they can't be watched doing so; and even the ones who have worked out that they have a different audience do not always seem happy saying anything meaningful. It must make them feel naked. Representatives of trades unions and business interests are the worst; they tend to use sticks of abstract polysyllables which may have meant something in other contexts but rub the meaning off each other when lumped together and brandished at an opponent. "I take up a very serious background to the unregistered position," a trade unionist was heard to say on TV. It is fair to say that he would probably have used the same words on sound radio; but there, at least, someone might have asked him what he meant.

This is a trend to be welcomed, though it is not without some snags. Witness the ambiguity at the beginning of this article when I said that sound radio was becoming something like a serious political medium. I meant that politics could be discussed on it with some seriousness, not that it was likely to have a serious political effect. The two things are not the same; the opposite rather, I'm afraid.

PETER DICKINSON

FOR
WOMEN



The Slips and Shifts of Fashion

DELICIOUS, de luxe, and designed by America's leading lingerie stylist, a collection of *New Yorker* lingerie in Courtauld's new fibre, Tricel, was presented last week in Piccadilly. Not *literally* in Piccadilly: no model girls in contour slips leaned against the IN gateway, or the OUT, of the Naval and Military Club; no trapeze-line peignoirs were seen in pre-Raphaelite poses in the courtyard of Burlington House. London has its conventions, and the L.C.C. its by-laws. There are also some quaint regulations attached to certain institutions which only become known to those who innocently attempt to infringe them. For instance, some time ago a rainwear manufacturer found it easy enough to hire the London Fire Brigade to play hoses over his model girls on the steps of the Albert Memorial; where he ran into a maze of difficulties was in getting permission to wet the steps.

The *New Yorker* lingerie was given a live presentation by London model girls, with the utmost decency and decorum, in the ballroom of Hamilton House. The term "lingerie" includes "slumber-wear"; and the slumber-wear included some startling revelations of the American way at night. The collection is arranged in four groups: the Trapeze Group, the Chemise Group, the Swiss Miss Group, and the Classical Group. Within these four groups Helen Hunt Bencker, the designer, goes to all lengths to provide all women with their dream gowns. Her shortest length is that of the Baby Doll nightgowns, which barely cover the boxer shorts or puffer pants with which they are worn; her longest length is that of the Classical nightgown, named

Cæsar's Wife, which covers the ankles. In between come the mid-calf length Waltz nightgowns, and the Shift nightgowns, which terminate just below the knee.

This shift length is the very newest, last-minute length—the late night final; and the shift nightgown is, in effect, similar to the masculine night-shirt of yesteryear. But it has many little prettinesses which our grandfathers' never had: the Chemise Shift nightgown finishes with a deep flounce of permanent pleats; the Trapeze Shift nightgown is trimmed with coloured appliqué; the Swiss Miss Shift nightgown has an overlay of sheer nylon, trimmed with rick-rack and Swiss embroidery. There were also peignoirs, those delightfully useless pieces of bedtime equipment, sweetly laced with femininity; and there were jamas—short for pyjamas in length as well as in name. The

Chemise Jama has a sailor top and bell-bottom trousers, pirate length; the Swiss Miss Jama has plain Tricel-jersey pirate pants, but its top is daintied up with swissy-missy décor.

There was also—contradiction in terms—a Classical Jama.

Lingerie, as distinct from nightwear, was grouped together under the heading of the Chemisette Group, and a new kind of under-garment was introduced: the step-in chemisette, designed for the new relaxed silhouette. It is really a revival of the one-piece garment which was one of the more unhappy sartorial expressions of the nineteen-twenties; and the audience greeted it with a certain amount of misgiving. More approval was given to the contour slips with built-in bras, and to the half-slips from the waist, which are straight and slim

with slits at the sides to accommodate the kick. When this half-slip is worn under a tight skirt with a back vent, it can be moved round so that the slits come back and front, thus preventing the slip from showing when you walk.

Although the *New Yorker* lingerie is American designed it is British made: over sixty British firms are already supplied with sample garments, patterns, and an illimitable yardage of Tricel. Tricel is a crease-resistant, drip-dry fabric and has the additional virtue of a "non-synthetic handle": its touch is sympathetic to the skin—silken, warm, caressing. This makes it eminently suitable for all the little douceurs of the trousseau. Tricel, moreover, is completely opaque, a quality which is now considered an attraction as well as a virtue: the most modish exquisites are no longer transparencies; it is very un-chic to be sheer.

ALISON ADBURGHAM

☆

Summer Dress

BE not this year forgotten
In fashion's history-book;
The year when girls in cotton
Had such a choice of Look;

When either side the schism
A rival Outline showed;
The one, anachronism,
The other, all the mode.
The former need I picture,
That old familiar thing
Of bust and waistline-stricture
And great full-skirted swing?

I'd have more words to spare for
The current silhouette,
But frankly do not dare, for
I've hardly seen it yet.

ANGELA MILNE



The Interview

SHE dressed for the interview with the great care worthy of such a momentous occasion. Not the navy blue suit: one did not want to give the impression of severity; not the flowered cotton—too informal. But the café-au-lait outfit should create just the desired impression—smart enough to give the right, slight hint of *savoir-faire*, but last year's, to deny any hint of extravagance.

She hesitated over perfume, decided not—a little too frivolous. An anxious study of herself in the mirror showed a face too pale (small wonder, considering the internal tremors she was suffering). A hasty dab of rouge, immediately removed—too hectic. Shoes? Flat and no-nonsense? High-heeled and assured? Better play safe with medium heels and no wrenched ankles. Gloves, and a hat of course. Not the eye-shading one—too mysterious; not the back-of-the-head one—too childish. A soft cloche—just right; decisive, firm and still becoming. A quick check of her handbag—keys, lipstick, purse, a handkerchief—heavens, a handkerchief! Fatal to be caught in a sneeze with no defence. The internal tremors increased as she reached the front door. A couple of tranquilizers? She held two tablets in her mouth while she filled a glass with water. Didn't they sometimes make one too assured, too talkative? Hastily she spat one out again. Time to go, not too late or too early.

The secretary, encased in an inimical armour of efficiency, took her name. Have you an appointment? This way, please. She was at the door, ushered into the office; steely eyes matching the steely voice greeting her. This is it. Desperately she cast about in her mind for alternative reasons for her presence. A donation to charity? selling subscriptions? She clutched her craven pride, took a deep breath.

"I have come to make a protest."

"Indeed?"—a touch of ice on steel.

"Miss Fossett, I must protest. An hour and a half is far too much homework to impose on a nine-year-old."

MARJORY JOHNSTONE

☆

"EDUCATED LADY aged 37 with daughter 15 months, very experienced with children..."
The Times

We know how you feel, dear.

Appointments Vacant

WHEN I went down from the opposite of redbrick I had to find a job. Or, rather, Miss Emily Frith, M.A., had to find me one. It was her job to find jobs for women like me.

She had an idea: the idea was shorthand-and-typing. But I didn't see myself as a shorthand-typist. She had a second idea, and it was teaching. I didn't feel a female Arnold of Rugby. If I didn't feel like teaching, said Miss Frith, she had idea number three: did I see myself cut out for shorthand-and-typing? If that was not my vocation, she had a further suggestion: what about teaching?

It went on for a year or two, like a dull patch of serve-and-return on Court Fifteen. Then I broke it to her, gently, that I wanted something creative. And that undammed the deluge. Would I run a marriage bureau in Birmingham? Would I be welfare officer to an aircraft company? Would I run a poultry farm with American graduates? Did I fancy advising oil executives hot from Arabia? Would I be a shorthand-typist at the B.B.C. (a little too reminiscent, this, of shorthand-and-typing)? Would I, since I was interested in nineteenth

century literature, write blurbs for a liquorice company? Miss Frith was growing quite creative herself.

I've found a job, now: almost what I wanted. I don't know how I'll break it to Miss Frith. I answered an advertisement in *The Times*.

JOANNA RICHARDSON

☆

A Question of Taste

O SPLENDOUR of slenderness, beautiful ghost!

With your suitable fruit and your terrible toast,

Do you yearn to return to the tart and the pie

And your fill of the grill and the roast and the fry?

Or do you believe you achieve all you wish

Not by cooking, but *looking*, a sumptuous dish?

HAZEL TOWNSON

☆

"You could make asparagus do duty at two dinner parties by using it as a table decoration the first night and eating it the second."—*Daily Telegraph*

As long as no one eats it at the first.



"I understand his wife collects antiques."

A. J. WENTWORTH, B.A. (Retd.)

Impressions of America

By H. F. ELLIS

ONE has read about New York and seen photographs and so on, so that the height of the buildings is not really a surprise, high as they are. One simply looks up, and there they are, and the only surprise in a way is why they stop when they do. It is not as if all of them tapered to a point like the spire of Salisbury Cathedral, which obviously cannot go any further. Still, I am no architect, and no doubt there are reasons—though an Englishman is hard put to it at times to understand why some of the things Americans do are done as they are, unless it is just to be different, which hardly seems worthy of a great democracy. The proper place for a telephone, I should have thought, is a telephone kiosk, not at the back of a shop where it hardly seems fair to make a call without buying something, which I cannot of course afford. This would be a nuisance if one had any calls to make.



I am the last person, I think I may claim, to be accused of insularity or narrow-mindedness, but what is the point of selling you a ticket and then taking it away and giving you another? I was astonished, when making a short train journey from Grand Central station (where the trains are all, rather inconveniently, in the basement—another needless eccentricity), to have my ticket taken from me almost at once by a tall, thin official, who gave me a longer one in exchange; or rather, instead of giving me the longer one he slipped it into a kind of bracket on the back of the seat in front. I said nothing of course, being in a foreign country, and a little later on the same official came back and took the long ticket away, giving me nothing in return. This left me with no ticket at all, whereas the inspector had two, a situation that could never have arisen in my own country. I should certainly not have objected to my original ticket being taken away, for that used to be done on the Great Western many years ago when I was a lad. But to exchange the ticket for another one and then take *that* away is arrant tomfoolery, look at it how you will. It is no part of my business over here to teach the Americans how to run their affairs; otherwise I might well suggest that these ticket exchangers would be better employed as conductors on the New York buses, on which all the work is at present done by the drivers. And what work! Money is put by passengers as they enter into a machine at the driver's right side, which would be sensible enough if the machine issued a ticket in return—except that that, I suppose, if the railway system is any guide, would involve another machine to take the ticket away again in exchange for a bigger one, and so on... The machine in fact does nothing in return for the money except to make a thin tinkling or rattling noise, yet it is a constant worry to the driver, who has repeatedly to wind a handle attached to it without producing any visible result. He has also to sort out the money which the machine from time to time disgorges into a receptacle, and stack the coins in racks in front of him.

As a mathematician I am naturally interested to know what the machine is for, how it works and so on, but the drivers I have so far asked have been too busy steering with one hand and winding and stacking with the other to make any very detailed reply. One of them indeed spoke to me with some discourtesy, not realizing I dare say that I was an Englishman.

These are just a few of my first impressions of America. Of course I realize that the same points may have been noted by previous visitors to this great continent; but then if we were all careful never to say anything that had been said before there would be some pretty long silences, as I remember my old Headmaster saying once à propos the end-of-term reports.

Another odd thing is that the letter-boxes on the side-walks (one soon picks up the lingo here) are not very easy to distinguish from the rubbish bins. I pointed this out to a policeman ("cop," eh?), who reprimanded me for posting a piece of chewing gum that had somehow got stuck to my shoe, and he said "Is that a fact?" in a surprised tone of voice, which only shows that it takes a fresh eye to see what is going on under your own nose. "Go ahead and drop your mail in the trash-can," he told me. "Just to square things up." We both laughed at that, and I really began to feel at home in this extraordinary country. I said I had met one or two fellow-countrymen of his during the war, and he seemed very interested, telling me in return that his wife once had a canary she bought from an English lady. One lives and learns. I must say he did not seem at all the type of man to take bribes or hit people on the head with rubber hosepipes.

The lectures I came over here to give—lecture, rather, for of course the actual talk is the same, though the audiences differ, so I am told—have aroused a certain amount of interest, I fancy. A surprising number of women appear to want to know about English educational theory, and I do my best to oblige them, though the only theory worth tuppence in my experience

is that if you say a thing fifty thousand times three boys out of ten may remember it. From the questions some of these ladies ask at the end of my talk I doubt very much whether they have ever taught geometry to a roomful of twelve-year-olds on a warm July afternoon.

"Does the lecturer not agree that infinite care and tenderness should be exercised to secure the willing co-operation of those young personalities that find difficulty in canalizing their enthusiasms to fit a perhaps all-too-rigid syllabus?"

A woman in a purple hat put this question to me yesterday, and to save time I said that I agreed; but I confess that I rather lost patience when she went on to ask whether it was not of vital importance, when budding minds were reaching out eagerly after knowledge, to avoid the risk of overstrain. "Madam," I said, "I have been teaching mathematics to budding minds for thirty-five years and never had a case of overstrain yet."

One would have thought that that would have ended the matter, but another woman said that the damage done in the early years often showed itself only in maturity, and a third declared that she knew of a case where a very lovely personality was warped by an unchecked indulgence in trigonometry. "The delicate membranes of the anterior lobe," she explained, and two or three women in the audience nodded their heads in an understanding way.

I thought it was about time we all faced the facts.

"There seems to be some misconception," I said warmly, "about the problem of teaching small boys. The risk of doing them lasting harm is unfortunately negligible. One moment, madam, please. The real problem is to find out what the little devils are up to. If this gathering were my old IIAA mathematical set, instead of the Ladies Guild of—ah—Mutual Advancement and Studies, I dare say I could show you one or two things that might surprise you. The lady in the front row here with her head in her hands may or may not be suffering from overstrain; if she were one of my boys I should know she was eating toffee, a practice forbidden at Burgrove during school hours. Overstrain indeed! Allow me to tell you that when two boys follow

a demonstration with frowns of concentrated attention (such as I am favoured with from the two ladies on my right) no schoolmaster worth his salt fears damage to their anterior lobes. He suspects, and rightly, that they are fencing, under cover of their desks, with school pens and endeavouring to jab each other in the fleshy part of the leg. The golden rule," I told them, raising my voice to avoid interruption, "is this. Never pass over a look of genuine interest. Whenever a boy has the appearance of—what was the phrase, madam?—eagerly reaching out after knowledge, make him stand up and show you what he has in his hand. The surreptitious reading of novels in the third row—"

"Who? Me! I beg your pardon," called out a woman suddenly, blushing in rather a becoming way. "I was only just glancing—"

There was some laughter at this unexpected intervention, and a girl in front turned round to call out "Caught you there, Mavis! Still up to the same old High School tricks."

"Don't you talk, Hester," the first woman replied. "You and that elastic contraption of yours in the Art Class. It's a wonder poor Miss Egerton—"

"Did any of you girls ever try pepper in a balloon, and then kind of let it go backwards?" asked a plumpish lady with grey hair piled on top, but several voices called out that it was old. Then quite a discussion broke out about writing messages in reverse on hand mirrors, which I could not quite follow, and in the end I had some difficulty in making myself heard.

"Ladies! Ladies!" I cried. "We are discussing overstrain. Please make less noise or I shall have to keep the class in this afternoon."

There was much laughter at this sally, but they quietened down, and the lady in the purple hat presently asked me whether corporal punishment was



still permitted in English schools. I told her that it was very rare, I believed, in State schools, but that of course in private schools, such as Burgrove, where the formation of character—

"You mean you have to pay to get it done?" interrupted a motherly looking woman at the back. There was a wistful note in her voice which made me feel that Americans, for all their tendency to highfalutin talk, are still sound enough at heart.

* * * * *

Had an interesting talk with a Mr. Schnaffler, whom I met at a dinner party given by a Mrs. Teeling. I do not know who Mrs. Teeling is exactly, but I was taken there by somebody called Ted, who it turned out did not know Mrs. Teeling either. This might have been rather awkward, but Ted said that George A. Mopus had fixed it up through a mutual friend and would introduce us all when we got there. There was nobody at the party called Mopus actually, but Mrs. Teeling was most gracious and invited me to spend a week with a Mr. and Mrs. Riggery of Colorado Springs any time I was over Denver way. American hospitality is quite overwhelming. What on earth

would Mrs. Wheeler, back in far-away Fenport, say if Mr. and Mrs. George Mopus turned up for a week-end with her at my suggestion! Still, I suppose if everybody does it it comes to the same thing in the end.

He (this Mr. Schnaffler) warned me that all his countrymen still had a feeling of inferiority when talking to an Englishman because of their lack of culture. He said the English were all well-read as a matter of course, and sprinkled their conversation with literary allusions and references just casually and without bothering; whereas your American had to work hard to drag up something out of Donne or Congreve or Wycherley or Sterne to keep his end up. He quoted from Cowper and Crabbe and Gibbon and James Joyce and Henry James to prove his point, and admitted that he had only a nodding acquaintance with Thomas Nashe and Drummond of Hawthornden. "If you remember that, Mr. Wentworth," he said, "you will understand why we Americans are sometimes a bit tongue-tied and awkward when you come over to see us."

I said I would certainly bear it in mind, and he went on to explain in historical terms the reasons for America's cultural backwardness, citing (if I remember rightly) George Fox's *Journal*, three Acts of Parliament, *The Federalist*, William James and the

pragmatists, the Monroe doctrine, Henry Cabot Lodge and Ernest Hemingway. "But all this is familiar ground to you, Mr. Wentworth," he ended (we were in the kitchen at the time, I remember, pounding up ice). "What I really wanted to ask you was what is the precise rating just now, over in your country, of James Gould Cozzens?"

"Well of course," I said, with my mind in a whirl, "it rather depends."

A Mr. Hackbut came up at this point with a cry of "Aha! The thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice," but I capped his quotation by remarking "What we need is a sledged poleaxe on this, eh?"

"There you are, you see!" Mr. Schnaffler said.

We all had some more Bourbon, and I remembered a thing of Dr. Johnson's which I forget. Altogether a most enjoyable evening. I have a note to ring up a Mrs. Theodore Kramm of Los Angeles, though I am not sure what about. However, she will probably know.

An American, to whom I made a remark about the Empire State Building, advised me to go up it and look down if I was disappointed with looking up at it from down below. He said even the longest cars looked like toys from up there. He also told me how many minutes it would take me to reach the

ground if I cared to throw myself over. Americans are oddly touchy at times. However, I took his advice, and found that the cars and buses on Fifth Avenue really do look like toys from a height of something over 1000 feet. All the same, I do not agree that the people look like ants, which he had also maintained. They simply look like people a thousand feet down below. Ants, after all, would be invisible from such a height.

I looked round at the view of New York and recalled that within twenty-four hours I should be flying home to Fenport, with another rehearsal of the play on Thursday in the village hall. I have my part with me, of course, and can it over at times like this when I have a moment or two to myself. They say the top of the building sways twenty or thirty feet in a high wind, which means, I suppose, that the elevator shaft is bent. It is hardly, one would have thought, a thing to boast about.

Eighteen thousand feet above the Atlantic!

"From up here," I observed to a Mr. Pullinger, of Minneapolis, who was sitting beside me, "your Empire State Building would look like a needle in a haystack, what?" It was said in fun, naturally. But he was asleep, I think.

Next week:

The Party at the Vicarage



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